

LEADING TRANSPORT
ARCHIVE MAGAZINE

» Ford D Series
Fire Engines

» Wool
Lorries

VINTAGE ROADSCENE

www.roadscene.com

Issue 231 February 2019 £4.60

BMCLORRIES AT WORK



**MONTY HEVER -
KENT BUSMAN**



Contractors' Buses



Fairground to Preservation



Swift Service

WELL-KNOWN NAMES ■ ELECTRIC VEHICLES ■ RALLIES ■ YOUR LETTERS

SPRING TRACTOR WORLD SHOW

Three Counties Showground,
Malvern, Worcestershire, WR13 6NW

23rd & 24th
February 2019

4 INDOOR EXHIBITION HALLS

SCOTLAND TRACTOR WORLD SHOW

The Royal Highland Centre,
Inglinton, Edinburgh EH28 8NB

23rd & 24th
March 2019

3 EXHIBITION HALLS

1/2 mile from Edinburgh Airport

For tickets and
show features visit
www.tractorworldshows.co.uk

or call
016974 51882



H.J. Pugh & Co.

SATURDAY Large Auction sale by HJ Pugh
Call 01531 631122 www.hjpugh.com



 **PENTLAND
AUCTIONS Ltd**

SATURDAY Large Vintage Auction Sale
Call Graham Burke on 07547 369295
www.pentlandlivestock.co.uk

SHOW FEATURES BOTH DAYS

- Classic Commercial Shows
- Veteran, Vintage, Classic and New tractors & machinery
- Classic Commercials and Vans
- Regional and National club displays
- Stationary engines, horticultural and garden equipment
- Model and old time farming display
- Trade stands, model retailers and specialist spares & parts

Our Sponsors

OLD GLORY
EST 1948 VINTAGE FABRICATIONS

CLASSIC VAN
and pick up
FORD & Fordson
TRACTORS

Tractor
AND VINTAGE VEHICLE MAINTENANCE
CLASSIC TRUCK

**CLASSIC
PLANT
& MACHINERY**

**CLASSIC & VINTAGE
COMMERCIALS**
TRUCKSTOP
THE TRUCKING NEWS SOURCE

**STATIONARY
Engine**
ROADSCENE

**Classic
Massey**
CLASSIC VINTAGE & RETRO

Tractor
AND MACHINERY
TRUCKING

VINTAGE ROADSCENE

WWW.ROADSCENE.COM

KELSEY MEDIA

Cudham Tithe Barn, Berrys Hill,
Cudham, Kent TN16 3AG

EDITORIAL

Editor: Mike Forbes

Email: vred@kelsey.co.uk

Art Editor: Rob Terry - rob@focusedondesign.co.uk

ADVERTISEMENT SALES

Talk Media Sales

01732 445325

info@talkmediasales.co.uk

Production Supervisor:

Dionne Fisher 01733 363485

kelseycommercial@atgraphicsuk.com

Production Manager:

Melanie Cooper 01733 362701

Publishing Operations Manager:

Charlotte Whittaker

MANAGEMENT

Managing Director: Phil Weeden

Chief Executive: Steve Wright

Chairman: Steve Annetts

Finance Director: Joyce Parker-Sarioglu

Publisher: Paul Appleton

Retail Distribution Manager: Eleanor Brown

Audience Development Manager: Andy Cotton

Brand Marketing Manager: Kate Chamberlain

Events Manager: Kat Chappell

SUBSCRIPTIONS

12 issues of *Vintage Road Scene*

are published per annum

UK annual subscription price: £51.60

Europe annual subscription price: £64.99

USA annual subscription price: £64.99

Rest of World annual subscription price: £70.99

UK subscription and back issue orderline:

01959 543747

Overseas subscription orderline:

0044 (0) 1959 543 747

Toll free USA subscription orderline:

1-888-777-0275

UK customer service team: 01959 543 747

Customer service email address:

subs@kelsey.co.uk

Customer service and subscription

postal address:

Vintage Roadscene Customer Service Team

Kelsey Publishing Ltd, Cudham Tithe Barn

Berry Hill, Cudham, Kent, TN16 3AG, United

Kingdom

ISSN 0266-8947

Find current subscription offers on our website:
shop.kelsey.co.uk/VRS

Website

Find current subscription offers at

shop.kelsey.co.uk/vrsback

Buy back issues at shop.kelsey.co.uk/vrsback

Already a subscriber?

Manage your subscription online at

shop.kelsey.co.uk/myaccount

DISTRIBUTION

Seymour Distribution Ltd, 2 East Poultry Avenue,

London, EC1A 9PT

www.seymour.co.uk

Tel: 020 7429 4000

PRINTING

PCP Ltd, Telford, Shropshire. Tel: 020 7429 4000

Kelsey Media 2019 © all rights reserved. Kelsey Media is a trading name of Kelsey Publishing Ltd. Reproduction in whole or in part is forbidden except with permission in writing from the publishers. Note to contributors: articles submitted for consideration by the editor must be the original work of the author and not previously published. Where photographs are included, which are not the property of the contributor, permission to reproduce them must have been obtained from the owner of the copyright. The editor cannot guarantee a personal response to all letters and emails received. The views expressed in the magazine are not necessarily those of the Editor or the Publishers. Kelsey Publishing Ltd accepts no liability for products and services offered by third parties.

Kelsey Publishing Ltd uses a multi-layered privacy notice, giving you brief details about how we would like to use your personal information. For full details, visit www.kelsey.co.uk, or call 01959 543544.

If you have any questions, please ask as submitting your details indicates your consent, until you choose otherwise, that we and our partners may contact you about products and services that will be of relevance to you via direct mail, phone, email or SMS. You can opt out at ANY time via email: data.controller@kelsey.co.uk or 01959 543524.



www.kelsey.co.uk

Vintage Roadscene is published on the third Friday of each month preceding the cover date.

6 Ford D Series Fire Engines

Ron Henderson looks at fire appliances built on a popular lorry chassis.

10 Contractors' Buses

Phil Moth shows us some buses which had a second and usually rather hard life.

14 Before & After - ex-fairground

vehicles in preservation - Part 2

More lorries which survived into preservation after use by showmen, Atkinsons this time.

20 Electric Avenue - Part 2

Malcolm Bates continues his look back at the various different battery-powered vehicles of the past.

26 Well-Known Names

Mike Forbes shows some more pictures of vehicles in well-known fleets of the past, with Smith of Maddiston and Turner of Soham.

32 Swift Service

Rodney Burt has provided details of the history of a company whose name was well-known 20 years ago.

38 Scenes Past - BMC Lorries At

Work

Mike Forbes presents another selection of pictures from the Chris

Hodge 'Stilltime' Collection, showing various lorries from Austin and Morris 'on the job'.

48 Kent Independence - Part 2

Allan Bedford continues with the post-war story of Monty Hever, a very independent busman in Kent.

56 Yorkshire Woollens

Stuart Emmett has provided some pictures of Yorkshire operators' vehicles which carried wool.

58 Rally Round-up

Nearly our final selection of reports and pictures from rallies during 2018, including the Halloween Run, Heavy Equipment Model Show, Dewsbury and Wirral bus rallies, from Mike Gosling, Keith Baldwin and Andy Taylor.

64 Scene & Heard

Lots of your interesting stories, pictures and thoughts on recent issues.

73 Next Month -

what's in the next issue...

75 Tailscene - "Out with the Old, In with the New"

The second part might be right, but we'll always be looking back...

SUBSCRIPTION OFFERS ON PAGES 46-47



6
NEXT
ISSUE
ON SALE
FEBRUARY
15TH



ROAD HAULAGE ARCHIVE

ROAD HAULAGE ARCHIVE

SELLING LORRIES - THE EARLY 1950s



A look at how Lorries and Vans were Advertised in the Trade Press of the period.

£7.95
inc p&p

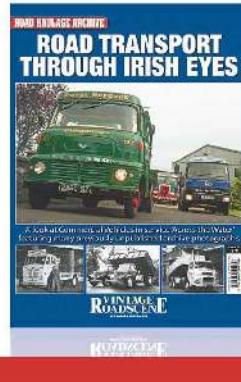
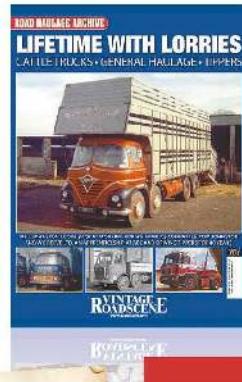
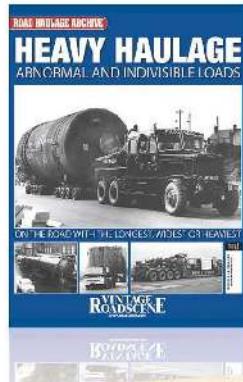
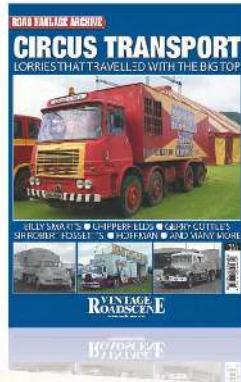


VINTAGE
ROADSCENE

www.roadscene.com

Issue 7 Red Van, Green Van (Post Office)	£6.50	Issue 14 Tipping the Balance (tipper lorries)	£7.95
Issue 8 Heavy Haulage	£6.50	Issue 15 Through Irish Eyes (Irish RT)	£7.95
Issue 9 The Rare Ones (lesser known makes)	£6.50	Issue 16 Timewarp Transport (Malta)	£7.95
Issue 10 Lifetime with Lorries	£6.50	Issue 17 Body Language (CV bodywork)	£7.95
Issue 11 Tanks for Everything (road tankers)	£6.50	Issue 18 Well-Known Names	£7.95
Issue 12 Circus Transport	£6.50	Issue 19 Loaded! (classic loads)	£7.95
Issue 13 The Light Brigade (vans & pick-ups)	£7.95	Issue 20 Parcels, Polish & Pipes (driver reminiscences)	£7.95

All prices include postage & packaging to addresses in the UK, see foot of page for overseas price information



SAVE OVER 16% WHEN YOU SUBSCRIBE!

6 issues per year for £39.99, post & packaging included, saving over 16% on the price in the shops

You can order any of the above by going on line or by telephoning our customer services department;



Current Issue and Back Issues go to
<http://shop.kelsey.co.uk/category/BOOK/HC>

To subscribe go to <http://shop.kelsey.co.uk/suboffer/rhas>



TELEPHONE (in all cases)

Call: **01959 543 747** – lines are open Mon-Fri
8.00am-6.00pm

For overseas rates and prices please go to
<http://shop.kelsey.co.uk/promotion/overseas>

Right: Was the British Motor Corporation trying to bring the Austin and Morris marques closer under the 'BMC' banner, or was the confusing number of different badges to gain a bigger share of the market that way?

Well, we're into the New Year now, and I hope it has started well for you. Hopefully, 2019 will be a good year for us as transport enthusiasts, with plenty of successful rallies to go to and maybe some new restorations to admire. We will certainly be digging in the archives to bring you as much as we can in the way of pictures and information about transport and the 'roadscene' of the past.

In some ways, the last year has not been a good one, as we have lost a number of people who made major contributions to the enjoyment of our hobby. Obituaries have had to be written for Stephen Pullen, editor of Heritage Commercials magazine, Ted Connolly, editor of Classic Van & Pick-up magazine, Malcolm Ranieri, whose rally reports graced both this magazine and Old Glory.

Now we hear of the death of Steve Wimbush, who was a key member of the Commercial Vehicle & Road Transport Club. Steve was Club Secretary and newsletter editor and played an active part in the affairs of the CVRTC for the 54 years since its formation, and will be sadly missed by club members and those of us who have enjoyed its input to events like the shows at Gaydon. May he, like the others, rest in peace, having given so much to his fellow enthusiasts over the years. We all reach an age when we lose friends and colleagues, but it is never easy. Let's hope 2019 is a happier year in this respect!

On a happier note, there are some great events already lined up for the new rally season. I know there will have already been several get-togethers, on which I hope we will receive reports and pictures, but the 'season openers' for many enthusiasts will be the Spring Tractor World Show, at Three Counties Showground, Malvern, Worcestershire, on 23rd-24th February, and Scotland's Tractor World Show, at The Royal Highland Centre, Ingliston, Edinburgh,



Above: Sort of fitting in with this month's 'Scenes Past', BMC lorries at work, the BMC Competition Department's Marshall-bodied rally tender turns up at various suitable events these days, like the Stony Stratford classic car meet on New Year's Day, where I took this picture

October 18, 1957

THE COMMERCIAL MOTOR

39

7

BIG REASONS WHY YOU'D BE WISE TO INVEST IN AN AUSTIN B.M.C. 7-TONNER

This great 7-tonner is now available with 160 inch wheelbase — check up on its many advantages at your Austin dealer's now.



Massively built throughout. Every part engineered specifically for heavy duty. Extra-strong chassis frame rigidly braced by 5 robust cross members. Exceptionally strong axles and springs take full gross load with complete safety.

Powerful B.M.C. diesel engine. 6 cylinder, 5.1 litre direct-injection engine develops 105 B.H.P. at 2,600 r.p.m. Precision-built injection equipment, with shrouded inlet valves, ensures perfect combustion with no fuel wastage.

All-steel safety cab with instantly adjustable driver's seat, double-opening windscreen, swivelling louvres for draught-free ventilation, twin wipers, numerous optional extras.

Electrically controlled 2-speed axle. Combined high and low ratios in the Eaton 2-speed axle give 8 forward and 2 reverse gears. Fast schedules can be maintained, overdriving eliminated, fuel consumption and engine wear and tear reduced.

Power assisted steering. The 7-tonner can be manoeuvred almost as easily as a saloon car. Power-assisted steering provides positive control and relieves the driver of all effort and fatigue without loss of 'road-sensation'.

Extra safety. Servo-assisted hydraulic 2-leading-shoe brakes provide adequate stopping power for any emergency. Cab safety features include welded steel construction, toughened glass, forward-hinged doors, excellent visibility.

Other great Austin advantages. The 7-tonner is also available as chassis with cab or scuttle on either 120 in., 130 in. or 160 in. wheelbase. Austin dealers can advise you on special bodywork. See your dealer, too, about the other vehicles in the Austin range from ½ ton. to 15 tons (Prime mover gross train weight). Every vehicle carries a 12 months' warranty and is supported by B.M.C. Service—Britain's best Service and Parts Organisation.

INVEST IN AN AUSTIN

THE AUSTIN MOTOR COMPANY LIMITED • LONGBRIDGE • BIRMINGHAM



Free personal
benefits for
your drivers.
Ask us for
details.

on 23rd-24th March.

Both of these shows are these days featuring an increasing number of commercial vehicles, with many lorries and vans on display, especially on the Sundays, with 'Classic Truck Drive In Days', making them the places to be for enthusiasts. We hope to see you there...

With reference to BMC, with its 'badge engineering' in mind, this and last month's 'Scenes Past' pictures have rather confused the issue. Having always thought that when the 7-tonner was introduced, it was badged as a BMC, at least at first, while the 3 and 5-tonners continued as Austin 302 and 502 or Morris FE's, it now seems that there were 7-tonners with the chrome surround grille and either Morris-BMC badges, as seen on page 40, or Austin-BMC, as seen last month. I've now found an advert for an Austin BMC 7-tonner in a 1957 Commercial Motor as well. 60 years on, it's all very confusing. I shall have to investigate further... But then, it only adds to the interest, which is why we're all enthusiasts in the first place...

Speaking of confusion, a mistake in the last issue referred to the 'last', rather than the 'latest' issue of Road Haulage Archive. Rest assured, there will be more this year, starting with Selling Lorries Volume 2 next month...

ON THE COVER...



More confusion, here is an FE artic with a Morris badge, rather than the expected Morris-Commercial, delivering coke for North Western Gas Board.

FORD D SERIES FIRE ENGINES

Ron Henderson looks at fire appliances based on a popular goods vehicle chassis.



Above: The prototype Ford D600 appliance for Gloucestershire Fire Service. The separate cab and bodywork was an unusual feature at the time, designed to economically retain the tilt cab feature of the standard Ford chassis/cab. This design was unique to Gloucestershire.

Ford's earlier vehicles had never met with much success as a platform for fire engines, prior to the introduction of Ford's successful 'D' Series chassis. Before World War II, there were a few Model T and AA light fire tenders, although the 7V model did gain some popularity, through the Home Office placing large orders for chassis-cabs, as a basis for wartime standard fire engines, in the preparations leading up to the war.

Many of these soldiered on after the war and thereafter the Ford Thames ET6 and Thames Trader were introduced. These two chassis, although popular with the haulage industry, were again not widely adopted by Britain's fire services. The introduction of the flat-fronted forward control 'D' Series changed all of that, however, proving to be an efficient platform for a whole range of fire engines.

Gloucestershire Fire Brigade, which had a fleet almost wholly based on Rootes Group vehicles, became the first fire service to



Above: Merryweather's prototype 'Marksman' fire engine featured a smart Reliant Motors-designed composite double-cab of glass-fibre construction, the whole of which could tilt forward. Lancashire Fire Brigade was the biggest operator of this model, while a small batch was exported to Western Australia.

commission the Ford D chassis for its new generation of fire engines, ordering two D600 petrol-engined water tenders and one foam tender in 1967.

With bodies supplied by HCB-Angus, the design was a departure from normal, featuring the standard Ford lorry tilt-cab, with the crew cab being incorporated in

the separate rear bodywork, with access through full height jack-knife doors. The glass in the rear cab window was removed and a similar sized window in the rear crew cab, surrounded by a large rubber grommet, allowed communication between firemen in both cabs.

The pump, mounted at the rear, was



Above: One of 14 Merryweather Marksman water tenders in service with Lancashire County Fire Brigade. The production models had larger and wider cabs with increased headroom and full-height cab doors. This one was initially assigned to Skelmersdale fire station.

Right: Serving with Greater Manchester Fire Brigade, this D1114 model with 50ft wheeled escape ladder was one of several inherited from Lancashire County Fire Brigade, during the local government reorganisations of 1974.

a Coventry Climax-Godiva type, while provision was made for the carriage of either a 35 ft wooden extension ladder or 45 ft alloy ladder. Gloucestershire Fire Brigade was quite happy with the design, as further orders to the same design brought the brigade's total up to 22. Apart from one other of the original HCB-Angus designed appliances supplied to Gloucester City, these appliances remained unique to Gloucestershire.

HCB-Angus continued producing fire engines on Ford D Series chassis, but all future designs featured the tilt cab being incorporated into the rear cab and bodywork. Marketed as the 'Firefly', this model was built in large numbers, with Greater Manchester Fire Brigade ordering a total of 53 of them in 1976. These ones were the first D1617 versions of Ford's SVO conversion of the 16-ton chassis to suit fire appliance operation. Powered by Perkins V8-540 engines, the chassis were de-rated to 13 tons gvw, with special narrow track axles, and a shortened frame overhang. Neighbouring Lancashire Fire Brigade operated similar types and the pioneer, Gloucestershire Fire



Service supplemented its earlier Fords with this model.

Merryweather & Sons of Greenwich, once a world leader in fire engine construction, turned to Ford's new D800 chassis for its next generation of fire appliances as a successor to the successful line of AEC-based fire engines. The Ford based 'Marksman' fire engine was introduced by Merryweather at the 1968 Chief Fire Officers conference at Torquay, before embarking on a demonstration tour of the country.

The design of this appliance featured a six-man one-piece double-skinned glass-fibre cab, designed and developed by Reliant Motors. For safety reasons, the rear crew section featured rearward-facing seats. Ford's new Turbo 360 diesel engine was fitted as standard. Lancashire Fire Brigade

was the biggest operator of the Marksman, commissioning a total of 14, with others going to Bedfordshire (2), Derbyshire (2) and a single example to Staffordshire. Five of the type were exported to Western Australia in 1970.

Carmichael & Sons, another of Britain's long-established fire engineering firms, also offered the Ford D600 and D1114 Series turbo-diesel chassis for fire engine conversions, as did relative newcomer Cheshire Fire Engineering. In fact, the Ford D was one of the most widely-adopted chassis for fire service use during the 1970s, both as a front-line appliance and conversion for special purposes, such as turntable ladders and hydraulic platforms.

In 1971, Northumberland County Fire Brigade, another with a fleet almost wholly-



Left: One of the 17 locally-built Fords of Northumberland County Fire Brigade. These vehicles were designated water tender ladder/emergency tenders, as they were equipped with emergency rescue and lighting gear, as well as the usual fire fighting equipment. All of them were later rebuilt with re-designed bodies.

Below: This rather unconventional-looking Gloucester City Ford was a one-off. It was built by Pyrene of Middlesex, a firm more noted for the construction of foam-dispensing appliances and airport crash tenders. Dating from 1967, it fortunately still survives.

based on Rootes Group vehicles, chose the Ford D for its future generation of fire engines but, as a cost cutting measure and to bring employment to the county, opted to design the bodies in house and have the vehicles completed by local coachbuilders. Ultimately, there was a total of 17 turbo-diesel vehicles built by three different coachbuilders, not without many problems, and thereafter the final five Ford fire engines for the county were built by established fire engine coachbuilders.

Compared with earlier Ford designs, the Ford D Series was a winner with Britain's fire services, several brigades standardising on the type, with almost all of the fire engineering firms undertaking fire service conversions.



Above: Carmichael & Sons also built many fire engines on Ford D chassis. This one, pictured when new and only part fitted-out, was assigned to the Beverley section of the East Riding of Yorkshire Fire Brigade. The station and appliances were incorporated into the new county of Humberside in 1974. (Ian Moore)

- ▶ FULL CUSTOM PROJECTS UNDERTAKEN
- ▶ REPLACEMENT SILENCERS
- ▶ STACK SYSTEMS
- ▶ SIDE PIPES

www.truckmax.co.uk
email: info@truckmax.co.uk

Make your Transit Custom Sound like a Beast!



MOT Compliant Systems

Iveco Mercedes MAN Renault DAF Volvo Scania



OEM Replacement Silencers for All Makes & Models

Manufacturers of Stainless Steel Exhaust Systems

CONTRACTORS' BUSES

Phil Moth has selected from his archives a series of pictures of buses and coaches, taken during their second, less glamorous lives, being used to take workmen to sites.

Building and civil engineering contractors have often run their own buses, to take workers to sites away from the areas where they lived, sometimes to fairly inaccessible places. A typical example would be when Taylor Woodrow was building the first Sizewell nuclear power plant on the Suffolk coast, in the early 1960s, buses were run from all over the county and beyond to transport the workforce to the site, which was somewhat off the beaten track.

The vehicles were provided by Wessex Coaches, with ex-Leicester, Birmingham and other double-deckers, painted dark blue with the contractor's name on the sides. They could be seen at all times, day or night, on roads which had possibly never been used by a double-decker before.

Contractors usually have the vehicles painted in their own livery, sometimes a bit drab for a passenger vehicle, but looking presentable, at least at first. The buses or coaches did not have to be to



Above and below: In many peoples' opinions, the Harrington-bodied AEC Regal was a true classic. This example was one of a pair new in 1948, to Surrey Motors of Sutton, a company itself fondly remembered by many. MPH 644 is seen in happier times on a coastal excursion, the driver appears to be taking a nap on the back seat! In the mid-1960s, the hard-working employees of Higgs and Hill at least had a comfortable journey home to the west London suburbs. Thankfully a similar coach, PPF 492, has been preserved, after similar use by Redland. The editor remembers seeing it in this company's colours at the original London Bus Preservation 'garage' at Cobham, in the early 1970s.





Above: A fine view of a former Leicester City Transport Leyland TD7. DRY 324 was a wartime delivery in 1942, fitted with a double-deck body built by Pickering. For some reason, it was rebuilt in late 1950 to a single-decker, the staircase area being panelled over. Leicester must have found it useful, as it was not until five years later they disposed of it, going directly to local building company, Jelson Ltd, which was engaged in a house building programme in the city.



Above left: The City Coach Company's origins go back to the London 'pirate' days in the early 1920s, progressively establishing itself as a major operator to the east of London, particularly with its route to what was then the very popular seaside resort of Southend-on-Sea. In 1937, twelve Duple-bodied Leyland TS7T models were delivered; 'bums on seats' was 43, a large seating capacity for the period, hence the need for six-wheelers. 1952 saw the business sold to the British Transport Commission, control passing initially to the Westcliff-on-Sea Motor Services and later to Eastern National. DUC 907 did not see further service after the takeover and passed to dealer Cowley of Salford and was one of three to end up in the Wimpey empire in the winter of 1952-53. **Above right:** Standing alongside the Smith's Coaches of Reading garage, CPM 14 was an unusual-looking Bristol K6A, with an interesting history. It was new in 1945 with a Park Royal body and re-bodied twice with bodies built by Brighton Hove & District in 1953 and 1954. Withdrawn in 1958, via a London dealer, it was sold to contractor Gee Walker & Slater of Derby, seeing use for only two years.

PSV standards, but would need to be mechanically fit – breaking down on the way to a shift would not be a good idea...

However, they generally deteriorated fairly quickly and could expect a short life carrying people to work, sometimes

ending their lives rather ignominiously as site huts, although some have survived to be preserved, restored to their original condition and rallied, as a result of their lives being extended by working for a contractor.

Another similar use for older passenger vehicles has been as 'berry buses', used by farmers in various areas, to transport fruit pickers to outlying fields during the harvest season. Perhaps we could look at some of these in a future issue...



Above and left: A very sad sight, this Duple bodied Bedford OB was in use as a restroom/site hut, on the construction of the Alton bypass in Hampshire in 1970. DHV 645 had been new 20 years earlier, to Broadway Coaches in the East End of London, ending its passenger-carrying days with Skylark Motor Services of Salisbury, as can be seen on the rear panel. It was presumably scrapped soon after this view was taken, though it is rumoured some old vehicles ended up buried underneath roundabouts on various road building construction sites. (Les Smith)

Below: On the Isle of Man, the backdrop to this view of a former Douglas Corporation Leyland Comet is the ill-fated Summerland complex. KMN 520 was one of three new in 1950, fitted with Park Royal bodies. Together with 519, it was sold to an island contractor, Parkinson Ltd of Braddan in 1968. The leisure centre was opened in 1971 and destroyed by fire two years later, the worse disaster in the Island's history with some 50 people losing their lives.





Above: In the early 1970s, Wessex Coaches of Bristol operated from a base in Heysham, for the purpose of supplying buses on contract to Taylor Woodrow, which was part of a consortium for the construction of the nearby nuclear power station. This Massey-bodied Leyland PD2 was one of five from the Colchester Corporation fleet on site in 1975. Freshly-painted bright green, 9668 VX stands beside an almost identical fellow East Anglian, AEX 335 from Great Yarmouth.



Above: In 1965, the Atomic Power Construction Company started work on building the nuclear power station at Dungeness on the south coast of Kent. Over the next few years, a large number of buses were employed, ferrying workers to and from various destinations throughout Kent. A former Hants and Dorset Eastern Coachworks-bodied Leyland PD1 is seen here between shifts. GLJ 957 was the first of a batch of seven new in 1948, not being withdrawn until 1964. Via the dealer, Jefferies of Southampton, four of the batch travelled eastwards to Kent by early 1966. The power station was de-commissioned in 2006, but thankfully the bus lives on in preservation. (Brian Weeden)



Above: Over the years, British Railways and latterly British Rail, operated a large number of buses for workers' transport and other uses; in the 1960s a number were even bought new. PFW 934 was formerly in the Lincolnshire Road Car Co fleet. It was a 1957 Bristol SC4LK, complete with the obvious ECW body. This bright yellow painted bus was a familiar sight around the railway-populated areas of York in the early 1970s.



Above: Beadle-bodied Bristol L6A, HOD 30, was new in 1948 and spent the next 12 years of its life on Royal Blue express services. Withdrawn in 1960, it stayed in 'Kernow' and together with sister coach, HOD 28, it was sold to English China Clays, based in Par, and was used for staff transport throughout the 1960s. In 1968, it passed into the safe hands of the West of England Transport Collection at Winkleigh, and through various owners over the years, it is preserved today restored to its former glory. (Mike Stephens)



Above: Engineless but freshly-painted, Albion FOW 585 stands in Lower Gordon Road in Camberley, Surrey in the early 1960s. It was a CX39N model, with coachwork by Lee, new to Eassons of Southampton in 1949. Its last PSV operator was Chandler of Send, near Woking, and here it is seen in the ownership of another Surrey business, Streeters of Godalming, which was one of the companies engaged in laying pipelines in the 1960s, so we could all be using North Sea Gas. (Les Smith)



Above: The London Brick Company, based at Stewartby, operated a number of staff buses, carrying workers to various towns and stations, all being smartly painted in the corporate red and black livery. For many years, the company favoured AEC lorries and its vast fleet was well-known throughout the country. Not surprising, a large proportion of its second-hand buses were also of AEC manufacture. A number of City of Oxford buses made the journey across to Bedfordshire in the 1950s and '60s, of which SFC 610 is seen here. It was one of four Willowbrook centre-entrance coaches, new in 1952 for touring work, which stayed in the Oxford fleet until 1965. LBC acquired the vehicle at the end of that year and here it is seen a couple of years later, for some reason near Hyde Park Corner in London. (Les Smith)

BEFORE & AFTER - EX-FAIRGROUND VEHICLES IN PRESERVATION - PART 2

Dick Furniss offers a selection of pictures, showing lorries in use with showmen and as they have later appeared in preservation. Last month, it was AECs, here are some Atkinson four-wheelers.

Atkinson lorries, as draw-bar and articulated tractors, and in load-carrying configuration, were always popular with fairground operators, from the early post-war years, up to the early years of the 21st Century, although only a limited number are to be found on British fairgrounds nowadays. Nevertheless, I have records of around 30 Atkis which entered the preservation world, after being disposed of by showmen, and in this article will concentrate on the four-wheelers, with six and eight-wheelers to follow in a future article.



Above and left: Although I have no details of the original owner of this Atkinson Silver Knight tractor, 8239 IW (Londonderry, Northern Ireland, early 1960s), I believe its first showman was London-based John Roberts. The lorry subsequently passed to Fred Thompson and is seen in the first photograph in his ownership, pulling-on for the 1985 Nottingham Goose Fair with his helter-skelter load in tow. In the second photograph it is seen at the 1991 Great Dorset Steam Fair, having been fitted with a short box body and probably used to tow the living-van partly seen behind the tractor, its owner unknown to myself.

Below left and below: This Silver Knight tractor, MCV 2F (Cornwall, 1967), previously with Thomas Whitelegg, was photographed by Paul Middleton while in David Rowland's ownership, with the dodgem trucks in tow, at the 1981 Teignmouth Regatta fair. In the second photograph, the Gardner 150-powered tractor is seen after disposal, in Peter Hawken's ownership at the first Great Dorset Steam Fair to be held on the Tarrant Hinton site in August 1988. Subsequent preservation owners were T Sedgwick and Mark Halford.





Above left and right: Oxfordshire showman John Hatwell used this 5LW Gardner 100-powered Atkinson Raider, 894 MKL (Kent, 1960), to transport his juvenile rides, as seen here in the earlier photograph, parked up at the 1983 Stratford Mop fair. In the later photograph, having had the box body removed, but still bearing the name The Cotswold Queen, the Atkinson was seen at the 1995 Great Dorset Steam Fair in the ownership of Mr R Bullen.



Above and left: One of eight bonneted ballast tractors, built as a special order for the heavy haulage branch of Pickfords, this Gardner 150-powered Atkinson, ALR 177B (London, 1964), one of two owned by James Crow & Sons – the other being a six-wheeler – is seen in the first photo with the generator and Monsters Revenge car trucks in tow, during the Sunday morning pull-on for the 1985 Nottingham Goose Fair. In the second photo, the tractor has been restored to its original Pickfords livery, in the ownership of Mr B Moody, at the 2008 Great Dorset Steam Fair.



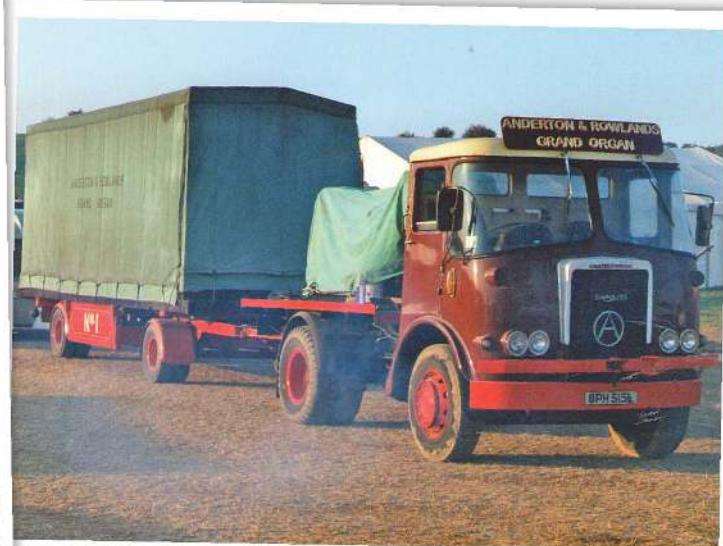
1 & 2: Also built for Pickfords was this Viewline-cabbed Atkinson, AMH 540H (Greater London, 1970), a type which proved rather unpopular with both operators and drivers alike, and was soon discontinued. The vehicle is seen in the first photo, in Barry Wareham's ownership at the 1994 Stonehouse rally, bearing the name Samson. The Gardner-powered tractor is pictured in the second photo, having been restored in its original Pickfords livery at the 2003 Malpas rally. **3 & 4:** Seen behind the scenes at the 1986 Cambridge Midsummer fair is Len Carey's Gardner-powered Atkinson Borderer box-bodied tractor, GFK 786N (Worcester, 1974). In the second photo, the tractor is seen with a generator mounted on its body, in the ownership of car transporter specialist, Mick Jordan, at the Banbury Steam Society rally held at Bloxham in June 2000. **5 & 6:** Yorkshire showman David Tuby used this Gardner-powered Atkinson Borderer, KWE 798J (Sheffield, 1970), to pull his articulated living-wagon, as seen here at the May 1988 Doncaster fair. In the second photo, the Borderer is seen at the 2005 Great Dorset Steam Fair, in the ownership of Alan and Peter Turner, hauling their Fowler showmans engine conversion, Royal Sovereign, and a Field Marshall tractor. **7 & 8:** Supplied new as a tractor unit to J Sainsbury's, Borderer PJD 817L (Greater London, 1973) is seen here at Windsor in July 1991, with its second fairground owner. Purchased in 1996 with a cracked block by Mr C Mac Donald, the vehicle was restored to the fine condition seen in the second photo, arriving on Madeira Drive, Brighton pulling a stainless steel tanker trailer, having completed the 2000 London to Brighton Run.



Above left, above right and right: This Gardner 180-powered Borderer's first fairground owner was Tommy Noyce, in whose ownership KPK 744K (Surrey, 1971), is seen in the first photo, pulling-on for the 1995 Nottingham Goose Fair with Tommy's living-wagon and juvenile ride in tow. In the second photo, it is seen in the ownership of fairground enthusiast Mick Green at the 1997 Great Dorset Steam Fair, before passing to Carter's Steam Fair, becoming fleet no18, used as transport for the Dive Bomber ride, as seen here at the 2011 Pinkneys Green fair.



Left, below left and below: Yet another Gardner-powered Borderer, OPH 515L (Surrey, 1972), seen in the first two photos in unidentified showland ownership, firstly on Hounslow Heath in April 1986, and secondly with an arcade(?) truck in tow, at Horsham in July 1991. In the final photograph, the Atkinson is seen about to depart the 2002 Great Dorset Steam Fair, with the Anderton & Rowland Marenghi Grand Organ in tow, while in the custodianship of Peter Phillips.



Right and below: This Atkinson Borderer, VFJ 549K (Exeter, 1971), albeit with a Silver Knight badge on its radiator, was operated for a good number of years by showman R Keeble, as seen here in the first photo, parked up at Warwick racecourse, awaiting the pull-on for the 1992 Mop Fair. It was later acquired by Mr D White from Melton Mowbray, who rallied the lorry for a number of years with the Luton box body still attached, although by the time the second photo was taken, at the 2017 Rempstone Steam & Country Show, the lorry was exhibited as a short flatbed.



Above: Seen in the first photo behind the scenes at the 1980 Cambridge Midsummer Fair is W Gumble's Gardner-powered Borderer, PTM 941J (Bedford, 1970). In the second photo, taken thirty-two years later in June 2012, after extensive renovation in D&J Haulage livery, with a well-sheeted and roped load on its flatbed trailer, the Atkinson is seen entering the Gaydon showground for the annual Classic Commercial show, where it is a regular attendee.



Above, left and below: Little changed from its general haulage days, this Cummins-powered Borderer, RNK 148M (Hertford, 1973), belonging to an unidentified showman, is seen at the 1986 Beaconsfield Charter Fair in the first photo. In the second photo, the Atkinson is seen in the ownership of Mr R Parsons entering the 1995 Stonehouse Rally site, with Michael Brain's Fowler Showmans Tractor on its low-loader trailer. By the time the third photo was taken at the 2012 AEC Rally held at Newark, the tractor was in the ownership of L Brampton & Son.



ELECTRIC AVENUE PART TWO

Last month, *Malcolm Bates* looked at the development of battery electric-powered commercial vehicles and how they fitted into the contemporary 'roadscene' from the very beginnings of motorised transport at the dawn of the 20th Century, right through to the 1970s, after a memorable trip to Brighton on a 1910 Columbia electric. Since then? He's been busy delving deeper into the archives for more pictures...

To be honest, it's not easy to get excited about battery electrically-powered vehicles. Why? Well, unlike a petrol or diesel-engined vehicles, you could say they lack 'soul'. They just sit there all quiet and free from oil drips when switched off (which, of course, from an operational and environmental aspect, is a good thing) and all the driver has to do, is throw a switch and engage a simple drive/direction lever of some kind and... off they go.

That's pretty much all there is to it. Just about any idiot can drive one. Which, of course, from a fleet management perspective, is also seen as a good thing! In the early days of mechanised transport, you can see why electric delivery vehicles had loads of

BATTERY ELECTRICS - THE EARLY YEARS



Above and below: This picture is doubly 'historic' in a way. It shows a 1919 American-built Walker 1-ton electric van, which was originally owned by Chloride Electrical Storage company ('Batteries' to you and me), which passed to posh London department store Harrods in 1930. The Walker had a speed of 14 mph and a five-speed transmission. B F Goodrich 'Tires' were standard and 1/2 ton, 2 1/2 ton and 3 1/2 ton capacity models were offered. The drive gears were located in the 'hollow' rear axle, we're told.

Here it is at Pease Pottage on the 1969 HCVC London to Brighton run, with a Morris Minor van and Mark 1 Cortina for company – both of which are now considered 'historic'!

WALKER BALANCE DRIVE ELECTRIC TRUCKS

Manufactured by

WALKER VEHICLE COMPANY, Chicago, Ill.

SPECIFICATIONS

Models	F	C*	D	E
Capacity	1/2-ton	1-ton	2 1/2-ton	3 1/2-ton
Wheel Base	86" minimum	94" minimum	121" minimum	140" minimum
Tread Front	56"	56"	56"	62"
Tread Rear	56"	56"	56"	62"
Tires Front	32x3"	31x3 1/2"	36x5"	36x6"
Tires Rear	31x3 1/2"	38x3 1/2"	36x5 1/2" dual	38x4" dual
Frame	Steel angle	Steel angle	Channel steel	Channel steel
Speed	14 to 15 M.P.H.	14 M.P.H.	10-12 M.P.H.	8-10 M.P.H.
Miles per battery charge—Optional.				
Front Axle—1-beam.				
Rear Axle—Hollow steel, enclosing motor and differential.				
Brakes—External and internal; both on rear wheel drums.				
Equipment—Complete.				
Tire Equipment—GOODRICH RESILIENT WIRELESS TIRES FURNISHED AS OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT.				

Drive—Walker Balance Drive. Motor and differential contained within the hollow rear axle. Brakes—External and internal; both on rear wheel drums. Equipment—Complete. Tire Equipment—GOODRICH RESILIENT WIRELESS TIRES FURNISHED AS OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT.

Walker Balance Drive. Motor and differential contained within the hollow rear axle. Balanced single reduction drive gears in each hollow rear wheel. Maximum efficiency.

*Walker trucks also manufactured in 1 1/2-ton capacity.

potential. They were quiet, pollution free and easy-to-drive. And provided that a high mileage – or hilly terrain – wasn't part of the operational picture, they were cheap to run as well. And because the actual concept was spot-on (unlike internal combustion engines, which have continued to evolve), early battery electric vehicles tended to have very long reliable service lives, which helped offset the higher initial purchase price.

In contrast, of course, petrol and diesel-fuelled vehicles variously needed regular oil changes, new filters, valve grinding, de-coking, new clutches and until the use and availability of anti-freeze became 'de rigueur' (which was later than you might think), expensive repairs to cracked cylinder heads and radiators as well.

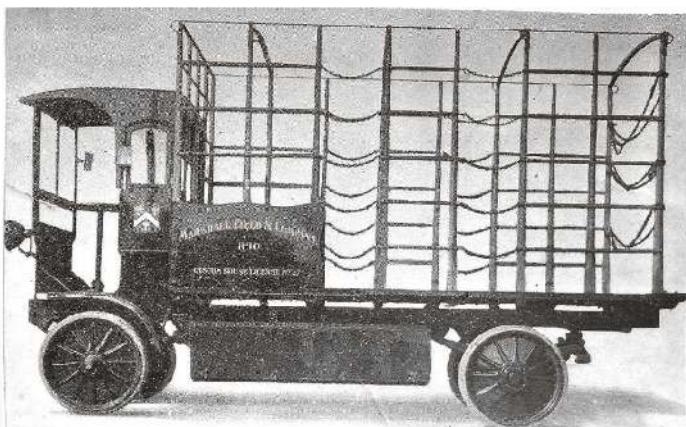
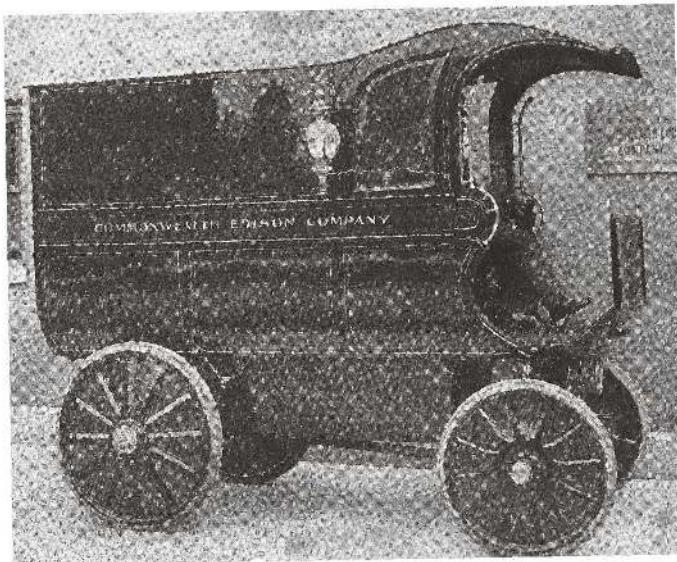
In today's transport world, of course, very few operators of commercial vehicles actually 'own' the vehicles that carry their corporate liveries. Most will have been provided on some kind of contract hire or leasing plan, with a



Above: Battery Electric 'lorries' don't actually feature in the archives that often and then when they do – as here – the key details are often missing! What we do know is that 'LPTB' doesn't, in this case, stand for 'London Passenger Transport Board', but unfortunately the coat of arms is not sharp enough to read. The single 'F' number plate suggests an Essex location.



Above: Here's another photograph that is frustratingly short of information on the reverse. 'Battery Electric Truck' isn't really enough is it? We do know that Thomas Thompson Limited of 'Hanover Works' in Carlow was Ireland's longest-established steel construction and fabrication supplier, but we're not told if this was a Thompson-built product or not. The hanging brushes on each wheel are another mystery – were they a way of keeping down the dust?



Left and above: Here are a couple more Walker electrics – a small ½ ton van from 1910, operated by the Edison Company, and a larger 3½ ton truck of 1914, operated by Marshall, Field & Company, which was a large department store in Chicago. Note the vertical steering column!



This interesting Ransomes electric lorry was photographed by Stephen Morris at what looks like Ipswich Transport Museum in the 1970s. Cab access for stop-start deliveries doesn't look like a strong point!



Above: It's April 1939 in a quiet London street and... Hang on, there's something funny going on here. The false shadows have been painted-in by the photographer. This suggests that the picture of what appears to be 23 new Sunbeam delivery vans for posh London store Selfridges is, in fact, what is known in the fotog biz as a 'composite shot'. Only seven separate number plates are readable and there are a couple of glitches in the line-up perspective. This suggests that after one shot had been taken, the vans were re-arranged further down the street on carefully plotted chalk marks. The negs were combined and then printed to suggest a longer line-up. Sneaky! Sadly, troublesome times were just around the corner...

'contract maintenance' and fleet replacement policy that sees anything more than a few years old – or when what the manufacturer sees as an optimum mileage has been reached – 'de-fleeted' and sent off to auction.

The whole notion of getting rid of vehicles just because they are old would have seemed barmy to transport managers of previous generations. Even small fleets would have had an in-house workshop with staff able to, at the very least, whip out and replace a clutch. If they didn't? Chances are that the supplying dealer would only be located in the nearest market town a few miles away. A long service life is seldom mentioned today.

The point being that the whole ethos of commercial vehicle operation has undergone a major change over the last few decades – fuelled in many cases by a continuous march of legislation, as well as an on-going race

amongst manufacturers to incorporate more and more 'technology' and creature comforts into the vehicles they bring to the market.

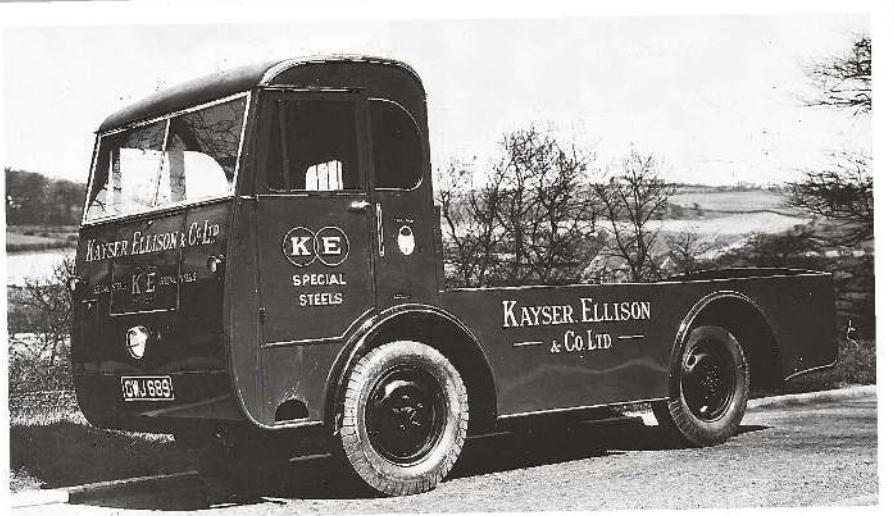
LONG LASTING TIMELESS DESIGN

In other words, features that are at the opposite end of the spectrum from the simple, reliable, long-lasting battery electric vehicle and its closely-related zero-emissions passenger-carrying second cousin, the trolleybus. Think about it. Compare the constant urge to 'fiddle' with little design details on a regular basis, as perfected by those ace-marketeers, the Rootes brothers, with the almost timeless shape and design of a classic battery-electric milk float, delivery van, or indeed a larger trolleybus. Those designed and built in the mid-to-late 1930s still looked perfectly at home in a 'roadscene' of the mid-1950s – and in many cases of

course, many would still be operating reliably and efficiently right into the 1960s.

But if that was the case, how come the sales success of electric vehicles is so patchy? And how come, taking on-board the point that the outward appearance of most electric vehicles tended not to 'date' like their internal combustion-engined counterparts, that sales of electrics didn't continue in the optimistic spirit of the mid-1930s and once again in the early post-war period? As we saw last month, at the dawn of the motorised age, electric vehicles were very much 'up there' in terms of speed and performance, when compared with internal combustion-engined competitors. Initially, lack of range wasn't an issue. And even if it was a factor, it would have been more than offset by excellent reliability and low maintenance costs, at a time when petrol powered vehicles could boast neither.

But as internal combustion vehicle design and performance leapt forward – by the late 1920s, anything from The Great War era looked positively ancient – battery-electrics soon started to reach the limitations of battery technology. But what is interesting, is that by the mid-1930s, 'electric propulsion' somehow seems to re-invent itself. Trolleybuses are heralded as the latest trendy thing, as just about any city and medium-



Left: Here's a 1941 Electricar 'Platform Lorry' which of course would have still been able to operate in the teeth of wartime petrol rationing. With only single rear wheels, operator Kayser Ellison & Co of Sheffield would only have expected to get a payload of around a ton – not much for 'specialist steel'.

THE POSTWAR ERA - ANOTHER BOOST IN SALES?



Above: This Brush battery-electric milk float is a very early post-war product, but the basic design could have just as easily come from the immediate pre-war period. Back in 1996, it was restored and owned by P Williams. It was photographed on the London to Brighton run. Did it make it to Brighton?



Above: This early post-war Morrison Electricar also has a fully-enclosed cab. We know from the specification on the reverse of the picture that it has 'four wheel hydraulic brakes' with twin leading shoes on the fronts. Batteries are Crompton Lead Acid - Traction 'Type 30's - fifteen of 189 ampere hour capacity. The transmission has three speeds forward and a reverse with a hand-held engagement for safety.

30 THE COMMERCIAL MOTOR April 30, 1948.

Local delivery for all trades . . .

the N.C.B. Electric

Designed specially for door-to-door delivery work, the N.C.B. "Electric" possesses ample margins of performance and delivery range. It is a unique vehicle in design, compactness and workmanship and its value for money is increased by lower running costs, simpler maintenance and longer service. For the operator who desires to establish local delivery services and to take fresh orders the N.C.B. Electric is the answer. Chassis are produced for 12 cwt. and 1 ton payload capacities and body styles for a wide range of trades have been designed in co-operation with leading operators. For overseas orders chassis with or without jig-built bodies can be dispatched complete or C.K.D. for speedy re-assembly.

Leading features:
Speed on level: 18/20 mph. Range 40/50 miles per charge, according to load and weather. Water 124 hrs. (1 hour rating). Gradient: capacity, full load, 1 in 4. Cost of recharging: 10s. 6d. per kWh. (1/2 hr. @ 16s. per kWh.) - Ten Mod. 1 (24 K.W. @ 16s. per kWh.) Full fall. Bodywork: designs made to "Commercial Motor" Test. Tail of the N.C.B. "Electric" published 19th Sept. 1947.

Batteries by Exide or Tudor • Electrical Equipment by BTH • Charger by Legg.

NORTHERN COACHBUILDERS LTD., CLAREMONT ROAD, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE, 2.

Builders of fine Coachwork for Buses, Trolleybuses and Coaches: Trucks, Vans and Cars. Phone: Newcastle, 23494. Grams: Claremont, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Above: Here's a treat for Dinky Toys fans. Here we see an advert for the NCB 'Electric' - essentially a high roof delivery van version of the famous Dinky model milkfloat. This ambitious full-page, spot-colour advert in the April 30th 1948 issue of 'The Commercial Motor' helps confirm that the electric vehicle manufacturers were keen to widen the market for what today we would call zero-emissions urban delivery vehicles, in the immediate post-war era. The advert suggests that aside from milk deliveries, 'all trades' could benefit, including bakers and laundries, as well as general parcels deliveries. The specification includes a choice of 'Exide' or 'Tudor' batteries and features BTH (British Thompson Houston) electric motor and controls. A speed of '18-20 mph' and a range of '40 to 50 miles per charge' is quoted, together with the suggestion that potential customers should send for copies of 'The Commercial Motor' road test, published in the 19th of September issue. This suggests that the test result was favourable! For a commercial vehicle bodybuilder (NCB stands for Northern Coachbuilders), this was an impressive advert, with excellent layout and informative copy. But alas, the big electric breakthrough didn't happen. Was there a single reason, or several? Note that in the advert copy, no mention is made of zero exhaust fumes or silent operation - surely the two big advantages of electric vehicles? Note also that better economy over petrol vans, reduced maintenance and lack of concerns over adding anti-freeze (which at the time was added each winter) isn't stressed either. A big mistake.

January 14, 1949. THE COMMERCIAL MOTOR 19

AN ENGINEERING ACHIEVEMENT WITH EXCLUSIVE FEATURES

The Q ELECTRIC VEHICLE

is SUPREME for Local Deliveries

Q UALITY is not the only feature of this new Q ELECTRIC VEHICLE. You get surprising economy, smooth riding, enormous strength and easy control. Yes, the Q is in a class by itself. See it - test it and you too will say: it's a Q Vehicle for me. Here are a few of its advantages:

- No worry over petrol shortage, coupons, etc.
- Charged overnight during "on-peak" services.
- Maintenance costs negligible.
- Low taxation. Insurance 33% to 33½% lower.
- Ease of control.
- Starts instantly in coldest weather. Anti-freeze protection.
- Tubular chassis provides extreme strength.
- Battery position for easiest maintenance.
- Convenience of labour-saving sliding doors.
- Low floor levels for easy loading.
- Independent four-wheel suspension for "flawless travel."

Normal and Forward Control 20 cwt. and 2½ ton models available.

Condition: Buyer May Purchase Terms as desired. Ask for demonstration in your district. Agents in most main centres. A few minor areas available. For exclusive representation.

Q VEHICLES LTD., 6 AVONMORE ROAD, LONDON, W.14.

PICTURE YOUR BUSINESS CARD AND SEND TO

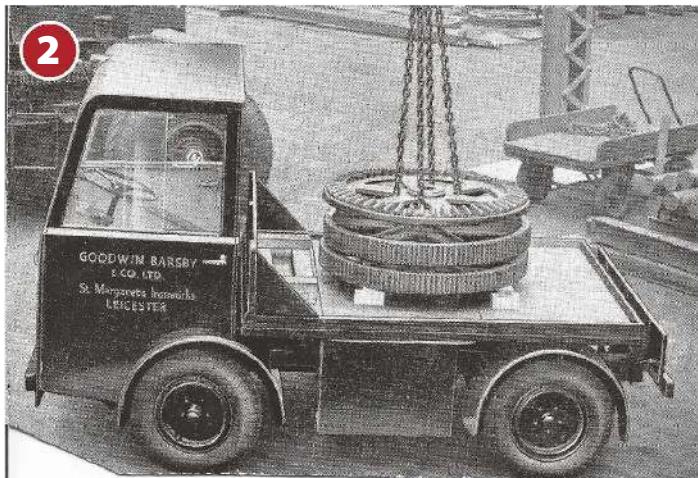
Q VEHICLES LTD., 6 AVONMORE ROAD, LONDON, W.14.

Please send me illustrated Catalogue and full details.

Please enclose description of the Q Electric Vehicle.

169

Above: After World War II, there was continued uncertainty over fuel supplies, with rationing continuing for some time, creating an ideal opportunity for battery-electric vehicle manufacturers. As a result, several new designs - and in this case, 'brands' - came onto the market. At first glance, back in 1949, the 'Q' had a lot going for it. One of the key features being that it didn't look like a milk float! Alas, the window of opportunity was too short for electrics to make a lasting impression. Once new designs of petrol and - in the case of Trojan - diesel delivery vans came on the market, that window closed. Pity, really. As the advert copy suggests, the 20 cwt capacity 'Q' was in 'a class of its own' with independent front - and rear - suspension, sliding cab doors, low loading height and, making the point about fuel rationing, no worries over 'Petrol Coupons'.



1, 2 & 3: Here we see three more Morrison Electricar commercial vehicles from the period brochure – a closed van for the Dunlop Aviation Division based in Coventry, a little platform truck being loaded with heavy gearwheels at the works of Goodwin, Barsby & Company of Leicester (what a shame we can't see more of the crane or the works behind!) and finally, an electric van being loaded with pallets by an electric fork-lift truck. Back in the 'handballing' early 1950s, this was extremely 'high tech' stuff!

4: This 1954 press release photo is something of a mystery. At first glance, it looks like any other 25 cwt Wales & Edwards milk-float, but look again. The signwriting on the front cowl informs us that this is a... 'Retail delivery demonstration vehicle powered by an air-cooled diesel engine'. In other words, this is a rare – possibly unique – example of a battery electric-vehicle being converted to internal combustion engine power, rather than the other way around, as per the Lucas Choride Bedford CFs. Alas, history would, no doubt, show that the concept of a (probably) rather noisy air-cooled diesel engine at 5 am didn't go down well on the demo!

sized town council aspired to replace clanking trams with fast, clean – and 'streamlined' – electric trolley buses. There were also several attempts at producing electric bin wagons and local tradespeople, selling anything from groceries to fish and bread to milk, started to purchase smart battery electric vehicles, to serve the new housing estates springing-up on the outskirts, covering distances far faster than the horse-drawn vans many still used at the time.

ALMOST THERE

So why didn't battery electrics continue to gain and hold a significant share of the light and medium-weight commercial vehicle market? And while we are asking that question, why was there such a race to abandon trolleybus networks after World War II? After all, many, like London, Belfast, Glasgow and Cardiff, still had new, or nearly new, vehicles that should have been good for another 20 years service. Or – as Bradford and Walsall were later to demonstrate – needing little more than an overhaul and perhaps new bodywork.

And how come, considering the early onset

of fuel rationing at the outbreak of the war in 1939 and continued rationing long after peace had been declared, British operators didn't see the benefits of using a fuel that, rather than being shipped in from some foreign country, could be generated by using a fuel dug out of the ground here in Britain? True, coal-burning power stations were hardly

'clean', but they tended to have chimneys well away from town centres.

And here's a weird thing: how come there wasn't a further increase in interest in electric vehicles after our national humiliation resulting from the Suez Crisis and yet more serious disruption in obtaining oil supplies?





Above: Wales & Edwards – 'W&E' – is another well-known electric vehicle brand. This W&E milk浮 is described as a '25 cwt delivery van', but it's hard to think of any other application in which a three-wheeled vehicle with such basic weather protection would be acceptable. The big W&E claim-to-fame in the mid-1950s? It was in the use of a glass-fibre front cowl – as seen here in this posed picture of a smartly-dressed United Dairy milkman holding his three 'pintas' for delivery to the big house. Note that only side-lights are fitted.

THE CONSPIRACY THEORY

The answers to some of these questions tend to include suggestions that the nationalisation of the electricity generating capacity by the early post-war Labour Government – taking over many municipally-owned power generation facilities – was a factor in the demise of the mostly council-run trolleybus networks. But in no official account of the history of vehicle development do we hear suggestion of any conspiracy theories by the oil companies, the manufacturers of clutches, or indeed the manufacturers of petrol and diesel powered vehicles, against battery electric vehicles. And yet, when you think about it...

Look at the evidence. Look at what electric vehicles don't need. They need far fewer of the replacement parts required by petrol or diesel vehicles. At the same time, they might last for two or three generations longer than a petrol van, or light delivery truck. But then it gets really interesting... Run down the list of vehicle manufacturers in Britain over recent decades. Very few established manufacturers of petrol or diesel powered vehicles also produced electric vehicles in parallel ranges.

Some, like Guy Motors, did both, in terms of trolleybuses and internal combustion-engined buses – as did Leyland and AEC in the early years. But they soon pooled resources in the post-war era to form BUT, thus making the electric market less competitive. Guy did likewise by acquiring Sunbeam. Richard Garrett of Leiston was a strong contender with both trolleybuses and

battery-electric lorries – as was fellow East of England manufacturer Ransomes, Sims and Jefferies. But proving the point, neither were mainstream manufacturers of petrol or 'oil-engined' commercial vehicles were they?

Perhaps Maidstone, Kent-based Tilling Stevens got the closest to being a vehicle manufacturer that offered the end user a real choice of fuel type under one single brand? Remember, it was Tilling Stevens that perfected the whole idea of the petrol-electric transmission, as a way of overcoming clutch and driveline wear, and it could perhaps be argued that, had smaller capacity high-speed diesel power units (like those produced by Frank Perkins) been available earlier, the added fuel economy of a Tilling Stevens 'diesel electric' might have helped the concept – and the company – survive long enough to embrace and meet the environmental concerns we are facing today? In the post-war era, Tilling Stevens briefly introduced a medium weight (Vulcan-based) electric lorry range, but it seems the takeover by the Rootes Group soon put paid to that. But...

AGAINST THE ODDS

Well, can you think of any other major vehicle manufacturers of petrol or diesel vehicles that actively developed a range of battery electrics? Just about all the other brands of electric vehicle come from small, specialist manufacturers like Hindle Smart, of Dinky Toys Jensen 'Jen Tug' conversion fame. Some, like Morrison Electricar and NCB

found a niche and stayed there. Others like 'Q' Electric Vehicles, briefly sprung onto the scene, only to wither and die after a period of trying to fight against the mighty oil company establishment.

You don't believe in 'Conspiracy Theories' back in the day, or now? So why would Ford, General Motors, BMC, or the Rootes Group want to spend money designing a battery electric van that would outlast the petrol models they sell by at least one generation? Not when that could lead to a potential market reduction of 50%? How would they convince the dealers with workshops and stores full of parts, that 'electrics' were such a good idea?

Only now – under considerable pressure from the environmental lobby – are mainstream manufacturers offering factory-built solutions, rather than 'third party' modifications like the 'Jen Helec', the 'Electrojan' and the 1970s Bedford-Lucas CFs. Thanks to the more recent breakthrough of lithium-ion batteries, the future could be brighter. The only cloud on the horizon (aside from the environmental concerns over safe mass lithium-ion battery disposals, that is) being that the oil companies are already muscling into the ownership of electric vehicle charging point infrastructure at motorway service areas.

Plus, of course, while you're reading this, you can bet there is a government department looking into ways of taxing the electricity used in motorised vehicles at a higher rate, to offset any losses in fuel duty!



Above: This NCB electric with bodywork by Smiths (of mobile shop fame) does, as the present day snooty classic car dealers suggest, 'present well'. With trendy, wrap-round windscreen, kerb-view windows and folding cab doors, it is as smart as any contemporary Dennis 'Stork' or Albion 'Claymore' and size-for-size features a much larger body volume than any factory-produced van from Ford, BMC or Bedford. This example went into service with department store Selfridges in 1957 and must have made an interesting contrast to the ancient Walker electrics still operated by competitor Harrods!

WELL-KNOWN NAMES

Mike Forbes brings some more pictures of the vehicles in the fleets of some well-known operators.



Smith ran a number of AEC Mandator Mk V tractor units, like DWG 997C (Stirlingshire, 1965), fleet no TD12, seen here with a full-length tandem-axle platform trailer. All of Smith's vehicles had the 'Smiths for Service' headboard, and 'Scotland (thistle) England' signwriting on the front, plus Smith of Maddiston on the doors. With the maroon, red and cream livery, they were unmistakable.

A couple of months ago, I said we would bring you some more pictures of the vehicles operated by some of the well-known names of the past, which didn't make it into our Road Haulage Archive issue on them, published a few months back. Well, here they are.

Most lorry enthusiasts will remember the 'Smith for Service' legend on the headboards of the vehicles of J & A Smith of Maddiston Ltd, based near Falkirk in Scotland Central. Apparently, this was Smith's official company motto; the unofficial one was 'The only thing that could pass a Smith's lorry was another one!' Some other companies' drivers might disagree...

We looked at the company in the 'Scenes Past' feature in the December 2012 Vintage Roadscene. Thanks to the website of local historian David Leaske we know that Smiths started in 1931, when James and Alexander persuaded their father to enter coal haulage and purchased a second-hand lorry, soon adding two more. Soon a contract was won with a foundry in Falkirk to deliver gas cookers to Aberdeen and back loads of fish were obtained from the local markets for delivery to Glasgow.

After the war, the opening of the British Aluminium Company's new rolling mills at Falkirk saw the company contracted to haul processed aluminium all over the country, with more new and used vehicles. The headquarters at Manualrigg

was built, after Smith of Avonbridge and Keir of Camelon had been taken over, adding another eight vehicles to the fleet. By 1953, there were 28 vehicles, a repair shop, office and storage space on a site with room for expansion. The company



Left: There were also AEC Mercury tractor units in the fleet, like no 314, RWG 764 (Stirlingshire, 1961), coupled here to a four-in-line platform trailer, which could be operated at the 24 ton maximum permissible gross train weight, like a tandem, so the unit would have been working at its design limit.

Above: This Albion Chieftain 'Super Six' fleet no 789, DMS 465C (Stirlingshire, 1965), would have been similarly taxed with a full load on its four-in-line trailer, but these look like empty drums under the tidy sheets.

purchased coachbuilder, Campbell Bros of Whitburn, so eight vehicle bodies per week could be built.

In 1954, branches were opened near Wigan, Lancashire and in London. British Aluminium and general traffic was handled, with return loads collected for the North. In June 1954, the business became a limited liability company, registered as J. & A. Smith of Maddiston Ltd and an administration block was added to the traffic office, garage and maintenance shops.

The fleet was mainly Leyland and AEC multi-wheelers with some Albions, Bedfords and Thames used for light traffic, both local and long-distance. Nightly and daily trunk



services were operated to the South, with general goods from Glasgow, Edinburgh and Falkirk, plus a regular contract runs from Bauxite works at Fort William and Kinlochleven and the Alloa Glass Work Co Ltd, taken on after the liquidation of London Scottish Transport, Smith's acquiring the London Scottish depot at Alloa.

In the late 1950s, the haulage and warehousing sides of the business were separated, with storage facilities at a redundant factory in Camelon, including temperature-controlled storage for aluminium, plus storage at Paisley, Port Glasgow, Greenock, Glasgow, and most



Left: Always a popular vehicle 'North of the Border', the Albion Reiver figured strongly in the Smith fleet, like no 376, WMS 101, new in 1963, parked next to a Bedford S van, with its load well-secured with a fly-sheet to keep the weather out.



Above left: An Atkinson 'Silver Knight' Mk I tractor unit, with another four-in-line platform trailer, fleet no 376, UMS 338 of 1962, ready to load for another trip south. **Above right:** At the lighter end, but no doubt worked just as hard, Smith opted for Bedford TK four-wheelers, like fleet no TS242, CWG 318C, of 1965, seen waiting to load.

depots.

The Smiths company was bought by United Transport in 1968 James and Alexander Smith continuing to run the fleet of 350 vehicles. They stayed in Smiths of Maddiston livery until the 1980s, when the company headquarters moved to Grangemouth and its individuality was lost – apart from memories like these.

Still a Family Firm

Turners Transport was established in 1930, when brothers Wallace and Frank bought their first vehicle and began delivering loads from their father's farm in Soham, Cambridgeshire. Turners has now grown to be one of the largest haulage companies in the UK, including temperature controlled storage and distribution and bulk tankers

carrying a range of products.

In 1947, the business was incorporated as Turners (Soham) Ltd, moving in 1952 to larger premises in Fordham, following the purchase of the site from BRS. An office and depot were opened in Norwich in 1958, with expansion in the late 1960s. Turners operated its first refrigerated vehicle in 1961.



1: Not the best picture, taken in a muddy lorry park on a 'dreich' day, but this shows Bedford TKs like 1967 JWG 886E were also used in the fleet as lightweight tractor units with single-axle trailers.

2: A classic 1970s outfit, a Cummins-powered ERF 64G tractor unit, fleet no TD706, WMS 324J, with a tandem-axle platform trailer, in the full Smith livery.

3: Later on, while the 'Smith for Service' legend lived on, the signwriting on the doors was simplified, as on ERF B Series, fleet no SD844, GMS 804S (Stirling, 1978), here pulling a tandem-axle Tautliner trailer.

4: Smith used a range of makes, the full company livery seen here on a Ford D Series tractor unit, fleet no OA504, NWG 921G, new at the end of the 1960s.

5: Like many other companies, Smith liked the straightforward Guy Big J, putting its attractive colours on a number of tractor units to its fleet during the late 1960s-early'70s, like fleet no GD844, CWG 845L of 1972, coupled to a platform trailer, with the customary well-sheeted load, ready to go.

6: Smith had earlier taken the Guy Invincible with Cummins power, like late registration MWG 88F of 1967, fleet no TD 454 here, with an awkwardly shaped load under the sheets on its tandem-axle trailer.



1: Another type of tractor unit used by Smith during the 1960s was the Leyland Beaver, like fleet no 378, WMS 774, new in 1963, a 24 ton unit suitable for the four-in-line trailer.

2: Like most transport companies, Smith had the odd panel van in its fleet. Here is Morris LD 1-tonner, fleet no 779, PWG 494 of 1960, which has an impressive list of depots on the side.

3: Like so many other transport companies, Smith of Maddiston was tempted by the Scandinavian offering, adding this Scania 110 tractor unit, 1968-9 Lancashire-registered STC 185G, to its fleet as no OD747, which probably worked from the Wigan branch.

A Felixstowe depot was added in 1968 for the nationwide operation of containers and TIR trailers, bulk tankers being added for British Sugar in 1972. Mayhew Freight was purchased in the 1980s to expand the powder tanker fleet for cement, sand and lime as well.

Up to 1990, the company's operations were based in East Anglia, with depots at Fordham, Norwich, Felixstowe and Hitchin, with a fleet of 180 vehicles, but the head office is now at Newmarket.

Frank Turner left the business in the late 1980s, but Wallace continued to expand it, aiming to become a national company, developing the refrigerated transport and storage and tanker operations. John Dee in Yorkshire was acquired, with contracts including Tetley's brewery. Hargrave



International, in Spalding Lincolnshire, Lowe (Paddock Wood), Fruitex in Donington, Lincolnshire, bulk powder specialists CRW and Sam Ostle & Sons and container haulier Dart Distribution were all acquired.

The company works for Cadbury's, supermarkets, Sainsbury's, Tesco, Asda and Costco, collects milk from farms, delivers to wholesale markets, cement for Blue Circle (now Lafarge), plus fuel for Total and Greenergy. Now operating 1000 vehicles and 1400 trailers, with 2000 employees, Turners of Soham has come a long way since that first vehicle in 1930.

Turners is one of only a few of the old-established names still operating. Is the

secret of their success the fact that the same family is running the business in the same way, moving with the times, but not changing things like the name or the livery as often as some others...?

■ There are a few more pictures of the vehicles in some other fleets seen in the Road Haulage Archive issue which we could bring you in a future instalment in *Vintage Roadscene*, but for the 'Full English Breakfast'-style helping of pictures of vehicles in well-known fleets, you can get copies of the Road Haulage Archive title and many more from the Kelsey shop, telephone 01959 543 747, or visit the website, www.shop.kelsey.co.uk



Another type of 32 ton tractor unit to feature in the Smith fleet in the 1970s was the Seddon 32-Four, like RWG 473N of 1974, seen with a widespread tandem-axle platform trailer with a beautifully-sheeted and roped classic 'hump-backed' load.



1: In Turner's classic mid-green livery, here is an early Ergomatic-cabbed AEC Mandator, EJE 156D (Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely, 1966), with a tandem-axle platform trailer, loaded with bricks.

2: Carrying a back-hoe/loader on a tandem platform trailer, we seen AEC Mandator, FCE 503D (Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely, 1966), parked in the yard, next to an insulated trailer, which the company ran on contract to Bird's Eye.

3: With a full load of empty pallets, on the cobbles, underneath the arches, here is another 1966 AEC Mandator, FCE 957D.

4: Like many operators, Turners used Bedford TK four-wheelers, like platform-bodied AVE 79B (Cambridgeshire, 1964), again in the yard with mills in the background.

5: Looking a little past its prime, like the yard where it was photographed, is Bedford TK dropside CER 437C (Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely, 1965). The Transport Association (TA) logo appeared on the front of most of the Turners Transport vehicles.



1: During the 1960s, Turners added a large number of Dodge 300 Series artics to its fleet. Here is 710 DER (Cambridgeshire, 1963), with a tidily-sheeted load on its single-axle Scammell coupling platform trailer.

2: Another of the Turners Dodge 300 Series artics, frequently sighted around East Anglia and beyond for many years, was BVE 420B (Cambridgeshire, 1964), again seen loaded and ready to return from the North..

3: Many other companies ought to take note that the livery on this Gardner-powered ERF E Series, E576 PEX (Norwich, 1987-88) and tri-axle fridge trailer makes it perfectly recognisable as a Turners vehicle today.

4: The 1967 Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely registration, FVE 767E, of this Leyland Beaver suggests it was a Turners vehicle working on contract to Bird's Eye, during the early years of this company's change from rail to road transport, before its own 'Unispeed' organisation was set up.

5: With the growth in refrigerated transport from the late 1960s onwards, Turners added containers to its equipment, like the one seen here on the single-axle platform trailer behind Guy Big J tractor unit, WER 506L (Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely, 1972).

Swift Service

Reader **Rodney Burt** of Northampton lent the editor a much-cherished book, which has provided details to add to memories of a company whose name was well-known 20 years ago.



Above: Swift's red livery, with the later style logo is seen here on new-looking Leyland DAF 85, P523 SBD (Northampton, 1996-7), with a tandem-axle curtain-sided trailer.

I well remember writing about Swift back in the 1990s, when I was compiling the annual Contract Services Review for a magazine called 'Distribution Business'.

In those days, under its dynamic managing director, John Brotherton, the company was growing fast, offering warehousing and distribution nationwide for company's as diverse as Ford, Mobil and Cadbury's, as well as moving into Europe. The company's lorries were a frequent sight on the motorways, with 'Swift Service' and the bird logo prominent on the red curtain-sides.



Above: A similar Leyland DAF 85, P610 GNV, with the Swift livery giving way to the colours of National Packaging Group.



Above: A double page spread from the book, 'Swift, The Story of a Transport Business', featuring our reader, Rodney Burt, with his Ford Cargo 1714, G140 GNV, when a photographer followed him on his early morning delivery round for Ford, from Northampton, around Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire.

By the time the book, 'Swift, The Story of a Transport Business', was written by Nigel Watson and published in 1997, Swift had been taken over by Christian Salvesen, later swallowed up in the XPO Logistics group. Rodney was a driver for Swift and featured in a spread in the book, following him on an early morning car parts delivery round. But we're getting ahead of ourselves...

Swift Transport Services Ltd had started life as H & A Swift Ltd, after Harold Swift began business with a second-hand lorry, believed to have been an Albion, in 1928, in Skegness, on the Lincolnshire coast, where he had moved from Nottingham with his parents. He started by transporting building materials and agricultural produce, soon adding a second second-hand lorry and later



a removals van.

A major customer in those early days of the business in the 1930s was Billy Butlin, who was establishing his holiday camps in Skegness, nearby Mablethorpe and later Clacton in Essex and Bognor Regis in Sussex. Harold Swift again transported building materials, supplying sand, gravel, cement and turf, as well as funfair equipment and zoo animals at various times.

The Swift' Haulage fleet was gradually increased, to three Bedfords in 1933, five in 1935 and nine in 1939. They were paid

for by hire purchase, and were augmented by hiring in other operators' lorries when necessary. The family business also bought out several local rivals.

During the war, Swift carried on with much of its regular work for local customers, such as farmers and Batemans Brewery, while transporting supplies for the army and navy training camps set up in the area added to the workload. Harold Swift continued to build up the business, until the fleet grew to 15 in 1949.

Then H & A Swift was taken over by the

State, in spite of Harold's resistance, and he became superintendent at the British Road Services Skegness depot. This was not a happy or very successful time, but in May 1954, the Skegness depot was once again trading as H & A Swift Ltd. During the 1950s, Harold began moving away from Bedford to Fords. for example, in 1956, the fleet consisted of eight Bedfords, two Seddons, an Austin, a Ford diesel and a Ford pick-up. By 1962, the fleet consisted of 14 Fords and an Austin pick-up and the vehicles were being replaced regularly.



Swift was the sort of company whose livery dealers liked to have on their stands at county shows, like this DAF 2800, D868 CNH (Northampton, 1986-7), note the Travis & Arnold vehicle behind – now part of Travis Perkins?



At this time, Harold took up a business opportunity, when Boston Motors gave up the contract to deliver spare parts in East Anglia for the Ford Motor Company, adding vehicles and 'A' Licences to take on the work. The spares were collected from Dagenham and delivered throughout East Anglia and later Yorkshire, with old engines and empty cases returned, drivers often staying out for several nights a week. The firm continued to grow, with Ford accounting for 90% of the

business, although there was also general haulage.

Although the firm had grown, it was still a personal family-run operation, locally-based, with everyone knowing everyone else and a sports and social club, while Harold was also involved with Skegness Football Club.

However, at the end of the 1960s, things changed. Harold was seriously ill, Ford changed to a 'break-bulk' delivery system, which required Swift to collect parts

from a central parts centre at Daventry in Northamptonshire, and Harold's son Rick, who had been a teacher, joined the company, taking over the day-to-day running.

Swift took over the former BRS depot in Northampton in 1973, after its manager, Dennis Yardy, had joined the company. He greatly increased the volume of work undertaken for Ford and the depot was soon too small. The fleet had increased to



Above: It has always amused me, to be honest, that British Rail always has to turn to road haulage to move its equipment around the country for refurbishment and so on. Swift was one of the companies which provided the service, as with DAF 2800, E757 FNV (Northampton, 1987-8) is here with a load of axles.



Left: An Iveco tractor unit, G667 NCX (Huddersfield, 1988-9), in Swift livery, with a tri-axle step-frame box van, in the Motorcraft livery used by Ford for its spares operations.

Below: A Mercedes-Benz 307D box van, E773 IVV (Northampton, 1987-8) shows off the older Swift Service livery.

75 vehicles, with Volvos joining the Fords and sleeper cabs coming into use. Work for Rockware Glass was added, for which a warehouse was built, with a new company set up, Swift Warehousing & Transport Services.

John Brotherton then joined Swift from Ford. Northampton was to become the centre of Swift's operations from the 1980s, although another distribution centre, at Normanton, near Wakefield, was also set up at this time, with the work for Ford increasing. Swift would gradually change from a regional distribution company to a national one. However, there was still business to be had from the likes of

Below: A bigger Mercedes, a 1625 tractor unit, E429 VUD (Oxford, 1987-8) with a tandem-axle curtain-sided trailer, working at 32 tons gross, in the newer Swift livery.



Right: It wasn't all artics, here's a Volvo FL6 curtain-sider, K527 WBD (Northampton, 1991-2), seen on a motorway.

Below: In the earlier Swift Service livery, Volvo FL10, D415 ANV (Northampton, 1986-7), is seen with a Lawrence David curtain-sided trailer on an 'A' road (no hard shoulder).



Boston Docks, where steel and timber were imported. The directors would still sometimes roll up their sleeves and help out with loading.

In 1983, there were two landmarks for the business. Swift won the UK parts distribution for Peugeot Talbot, national rather than regional, the company's introduction of computers helping secure the business. Depots at Coatbridge in Scotland and Maidstone in Kent were added at this time, plus a warehouse at Coventry. With sub-contractors in Exeter and Carlisle, coverage was becoming national.

Sadly, the time had come to move from Skegness, partly to the recently-established Boston depot, while a new headquarters was set up at toy-maker Mettoy's former premises at Northampton, pallets of Nacanco cans replacing footballs in the warehouse. Elida Gibbs, DSM Resins, Hawker Siddeley Powerplant and paper company, Samuel Jones of St Neots were added to the customer list.

In 1985, Swift became part of the LEP Group. Its handling of documentation and the complexities of cross-border business was at risk with the influence

of the European Union, so Swift was to grow its continental business, although retaining its name, livery and management structure. Meanwhile, Swift took over the UK freight forwarding work for LEP, airfreight at Heathrow, plus depots at Trafford Park, Manchester and Stoke-on-Trent, where a

contract for Century Oils was based. In the late 1980s, LEP-Swift took over companies in Germany, Holland, Belgium and Denmark.

Swift also took over Howard Tenens, based in Swindon, with the Unipart contract, which was added to the Ford, New Holland and Massey Ferguson tractors and GEFCO, after the Peugeot business was lost, then quickly regained. Other customers included British Rail and British Coal.

In 1991, having grown, largely thanks to Swift's success, LEP was in difficulties because of problems with the European businesses, and John Brotherton and Dennis Yardy led a management buyout of Swift, with Swift Distribution Holdings being set up, big news in the logistics sector, celebrated with a new contract with Lucas Automotive.

In spite of the early 1990s recession, Swift continued to do well, with new depots in Bovey Tracey, Devon, and Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, where the Byford Cargo Express



Above: Swift obviously used a variety of makes, but not the top-of-the-range high-powered units. Here's a Scania 92, E735 CBH (Buckinghamshire, 1987-8), with a curtain-sider in the later Swift livery.



Above 1-6: Variations on a theme – here we have a number of Volvo FL10 units, with trailers in customers' liveries, E259 RWT with a 'Unipart' trailer, E596 VUB with a 'Rockware' trailer, F848 BOH with a box trailer in 'LEP SWIFT' livery, H821 TNH, with both it and trailer in Unipart colours, G546 EOL with a Ford 'Motorcraft' trailer and H641 UVH with a step-frame trailer in Courtaulds Aerospace livery.

company had been acquired. New business came from Vauxhall, Multipart, Leyland DAF, Manor Bakeries and H & R Johnson, among others.

The company wanted to regain its European capability and tried to form a European Alliance with other independent distribution companies, but Swift was suffering from a lack of capital to expand. The distribution business was becoming polarised – and has continued to do so –

between half a dozen giant companies, then National Freight Corporation, Transport Development Group, TNT, Tibbett & Britten and Christian Salvesen. These days, all of these companies have, in turn, been swallowed up by even bigger global players.

The result was that Swift was sold to Christian Salvesen in 1993. In what John Brotherton described as 'the continued pace of change', Swift continued to flourish as part

of Salvesen, having come a long way from the single lorry bought by Harold Swift in Skegness in 1928.

The lorries in the pictures here, supplied by PM Photography, date from the later heyday of Swift Service, with the company's name and logo standing out on the red livery or giving way to customers' own colours. It is quite surprising that a name and livery, so familiar only 20-30 years ago, should now be part of history...

BMC LORRIES AT WORK

This time **Mike Forbes** has selected some pictures of BMC lorries in service with operators from the Chris Hodge 'Stilltime' Collection of pictures.

Last month's 'Scenes Past' featured pictures of lorries made by the British Motor Corporation Ltd (BMC) at various shows and on test over the years they were in production. This time, we are looking at these vehicles at work.

When BMC was formed as a holding company in 1952, merging the Austin Motor company with the Nuffield Organisation, which owned Morris, Morris-Commercial, plus MG, Riley and Wolseley, as far as commercial vehicle were concerned, two rival ranges had to be combined into one.

However, at the same time, the new organisation had to keep in mind that it needed to remain loyal to both the Austin and Morris-Commercial dealerships, as well as their customers. The result was a range of vehicles under both names, 'badge-engineering' two more or less identical sets of lorries. This, no doubt, helped BMC to retain a larger share of the market than it



Above: The North Western Gas Board fleet was quite mixed, with Karrier, Leyland and Ford, as well as Morris vehicles. Here is an early 1955 example of the earlier Morris-Commercial FV model, PVR 77, although sporting a Morris badge, following the BMC merger. The crew are delivering from a full load of coke in sacks (a by-product of gasworks in those days) from the platform trailer, parked on the setts outside the Miles Platting Methodist Church, with a Morris Oxford car in the background. (CHC aas426)

Above: An interesting picture of gas pipes being unloaded from a North Western Gas Board Morris FE tractor unit, UVU 145 (Manchester, late 1957), with a Scammell coupling platform trailer. The scene is a typical industrial area, complete with a road surface of granite 'setts'. These rather contrast with the use of a modern-style Neal Lorry Loader, mounted behind the cab, to unload the pipes. (CHC abb912)



might have done otherwise, if either range had been discontinued in favour of the other.

After 60 years or so, it is even more difficult to sort out the different models than it might have been at the time, with Austin and Morris-badged vehicles – after the Morris-Commercial name was dropped in 1956 – given different model numbers or letters from each other, so please pardon any confusion – maybe it was intentional to help separate the two ranges...

It seems the best models and features from the inherited Austin and Morris models were put together in the new ranges, with some heavier models added with a 'BMC' badge.

Here we are looking at the period



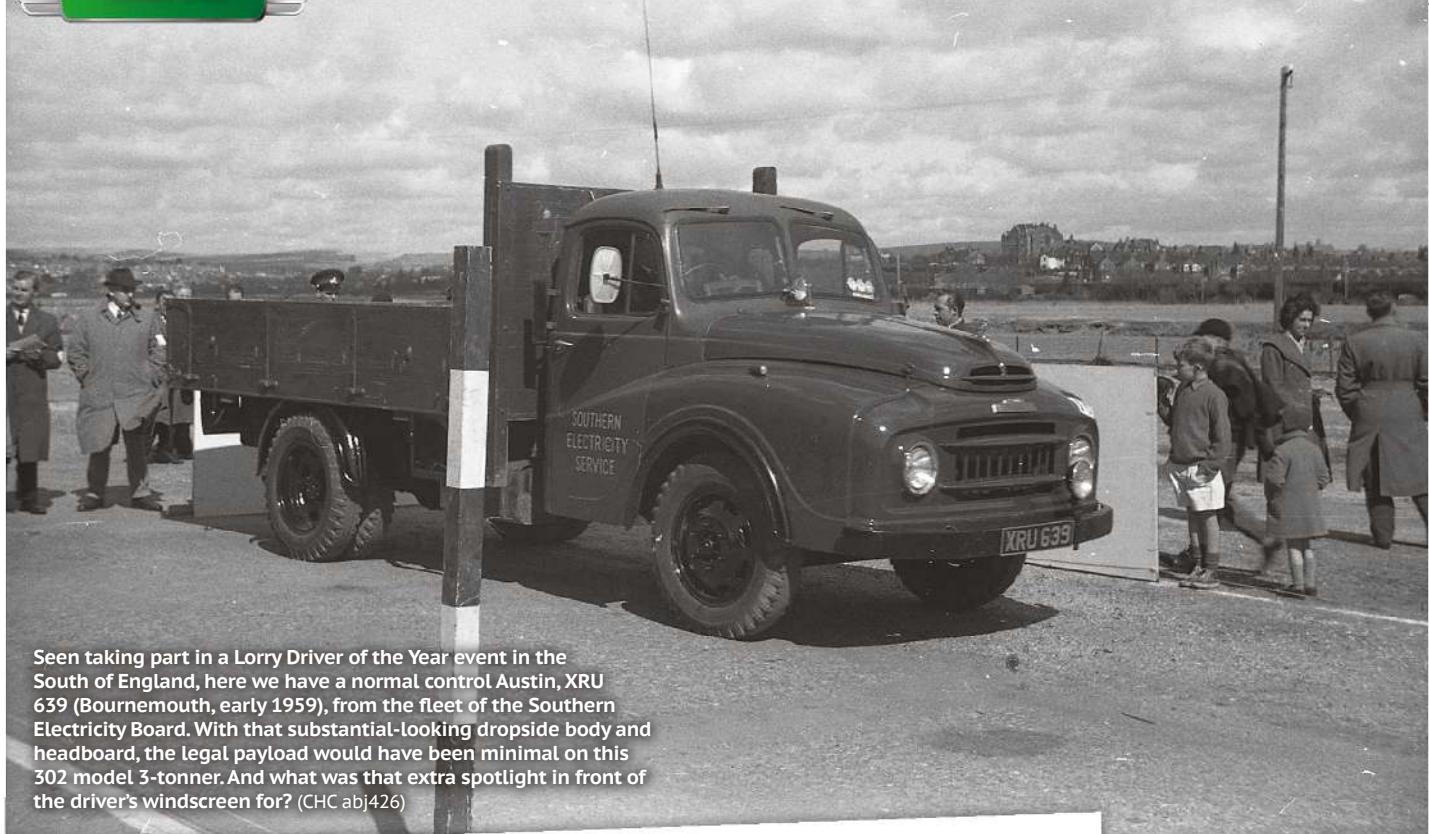
Right: E W Watts (Haulage) Ltd of Bassett's Pole, near Sutton Coldfield, was another company with a mixed fleet, which included a number of BMC lorries. This operator was engaged in livestock and other agricultural haulage, including milk collection, as demonstrated by the load of churns on this Austin 502 version of the FE 5-tonner, SNX 502 (Warwickshire, 1955), with a low-mounted light alloy dropside body, adapted for its regular loads. (CHC aat709)

covering the late 1950s and early 1960s, before BMC merged with Jaguar Cars Limited in 1966, and changed its name to British Motor Holdings Limited (BMH), which again merged with Leyland Motor Corporation Limited – including AEC, Albion, Scammell, Standard-Triumph cars and more – forming British Leyland Motor Corporation in 1968.

We'll gloss over the story of the downward spiral of that top-heavy

organisation, concentrating on the car market, at the cost of the lorry market at home and abroad, eventually leading to the lamentable state we are in now, virtually totally reliant on imported commercial vehicles.

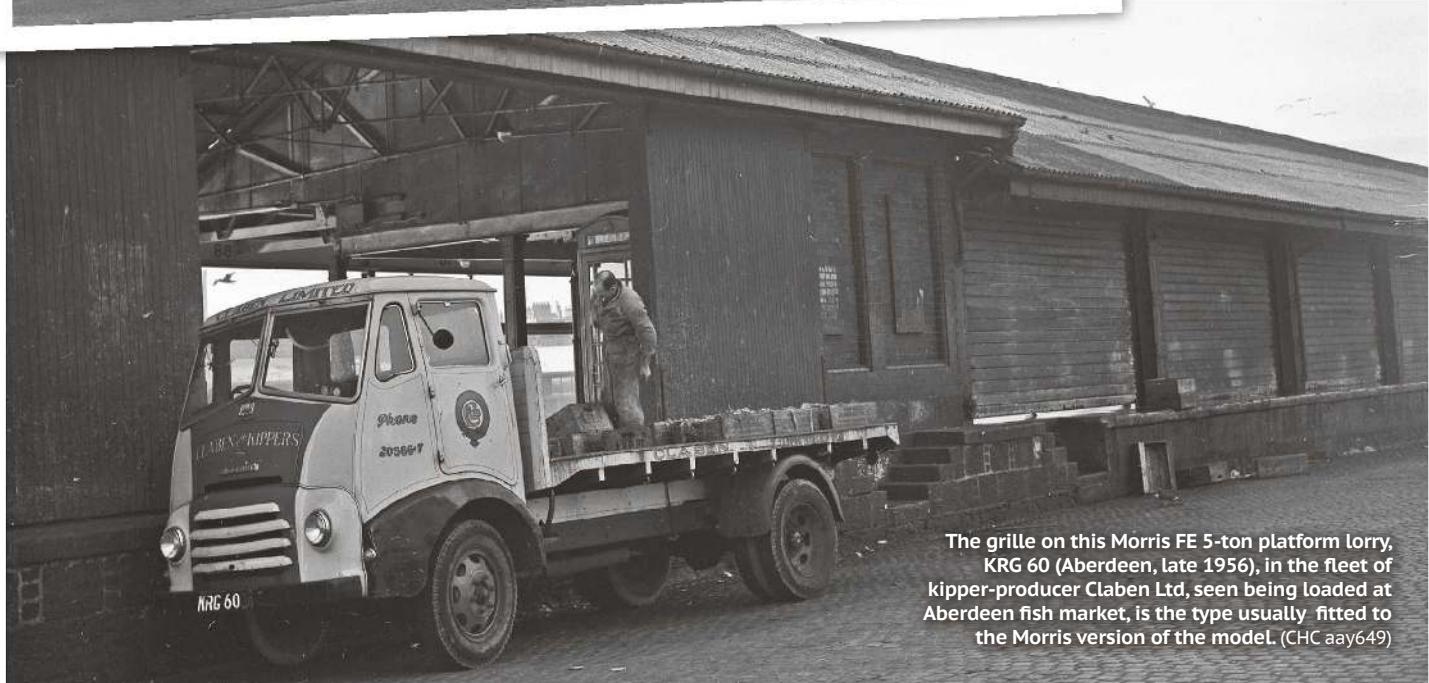
The vehicles here date back to happier times for British lorries, when the range on offer from Austin, Morris and BMC took a significant share of the market for light and middle-weight commercial vehicles.



Seen taking part in a Lorry Driver of the Year event in the South of England, here we have a normal control Austin, XRU 639 (Bournemouth, early 1959), from the fleet of the Southern Electricity Board. With that substantial-looking dropside body and headboard, the legal payload would have been minimal on this 302 model 3-tonner. And what was that extra spotlight in front of the driver's windscreen for? (CHC abj426)



Left: Posed on the weighbridge at the council depot of the City and Royal Burgh of Dunfermline is an unusual application of a normal control chassis as the basis of a refuse collection vehicle. The eight-stud wheels show that 5626 FG (Fife, 1962), was an Austin 502 5-tonner, fitted with the BMC 5.1 litre diesel engine, as shown by the badge on the radiator grille. (CHC abi866)



The grille on this Morris FE 5-ton platform lorry, KRG 60 (Aberdeen, late 1956), in the fleet of kipper-producer Claben Ltd, seen being loaded at Aberdeen fish market, is the type usually fitted to the Morris version of the model. (CHC aay649)



Above: The shorter wheelbase and six-stud wheels show that RDN 42 (York, mid-1958) was an Austin 302 3 ton chassis, fitted with box van bodywork for Yorkshire Egg Producers, seen being loaded through one of the roller-shuttered side doors. Note the BMC Driver's club badge, as well as the BMC Diesel badge on the Austin-style grille. (CHC aax298)

Right: The Morris grille is also seen on this normal control 'WE' model 5 ton tipper, KCL 68 (Norwich, late 1956). The short wheelbase chassis was fitted with a wooden tipping body for the well-known Pointer Group, for the delivery of sand and gravel. (CHC aav577)



Above: Max Robinson Transport, based in Manchester, used this Austin 502 dropside 5-tonner, SNC 786 (Manchester, early 1956), on the company's general haulage work. (CHC aas121)



Right: Staying with the agricultural theme, here is an Austin 502, this time with no diesel badge, KUD 930 (Oxfordshire, late 1956), carrying a livestock body, used by B Buckingham, cattle rearers of Eynsham, Oxfordshire, parked at the local cattle market, next to an earlier Austin Loadstar, with another 'FE' or '502' to the rear with a Commer Superpoise and Bedford OL. (CHC abe043)





Above: Not strictly working, but at an auction in the South of England, where we saw some vans a couple of issues back, ready for sale to a new operator, this Austin 502 Diesel, MAP 457 (East Sussex, 1957), is fitted with a dropside body with those typical 'squared-off' rear wings, usually found on an S Type Bedford... (CHC abh074)

Left: 'Servis' made electric washing machines for many years. It looks as if the Scammell Scarab 6-tonners, UDH 33 and 733 ADH (Walsall, 1954 and 1957) were used to move the drop-frame box van trailers around locally, while the BMC Diesel-powered Austin 502 tractor unit, 333 PRE (Staffordshire, 1957), took over for the long distance delivery runs to retailers, which would be the electricity board shops, as well as electrical goods stores. (CHC aas173)



Right: This Morris-badged BMC 7-tonner, with dropside body, 288 CMB (Cheshire, 1958), was in the fleet of F Swain & Sons, Haulage Contractors, of Prestbury, Cheshire, alongside a similar capacity Commer QX, a Thornycroft Sturdy and an older Austin K4, used for milk churn collections. (CHC aar708)

Right: Seen hard at work, under the loading gantry, and sporting the expected BMC badge, as well as the grille usually used on the heavier capacity model, this 7-tonner, SWD 792 (Warwickshire, late 1955), was fitted with a Rapier 2½ cubic yard Truck Mixer unit, in the fleet of Turriff Construction Corporation, based in Warwick. (CHC aaj251)



Below: This BMC 7-tonner was photographed as a new addition to the Turriff fleet, on Coventry tradeplates, 753 RW, fitted with a steel tipper body with substantial cab protection, carrying a small water tanker trailer. (CHC aax618)



Below: A smart-looking BMC 7-tonner, PUY 69 (Worcestershire, late 1955), with a platform body, carrying a lift-off insulated container, from the fleet of Marshall's Transport of Evesham, making its way along a main road nearby. (CHC aav340)

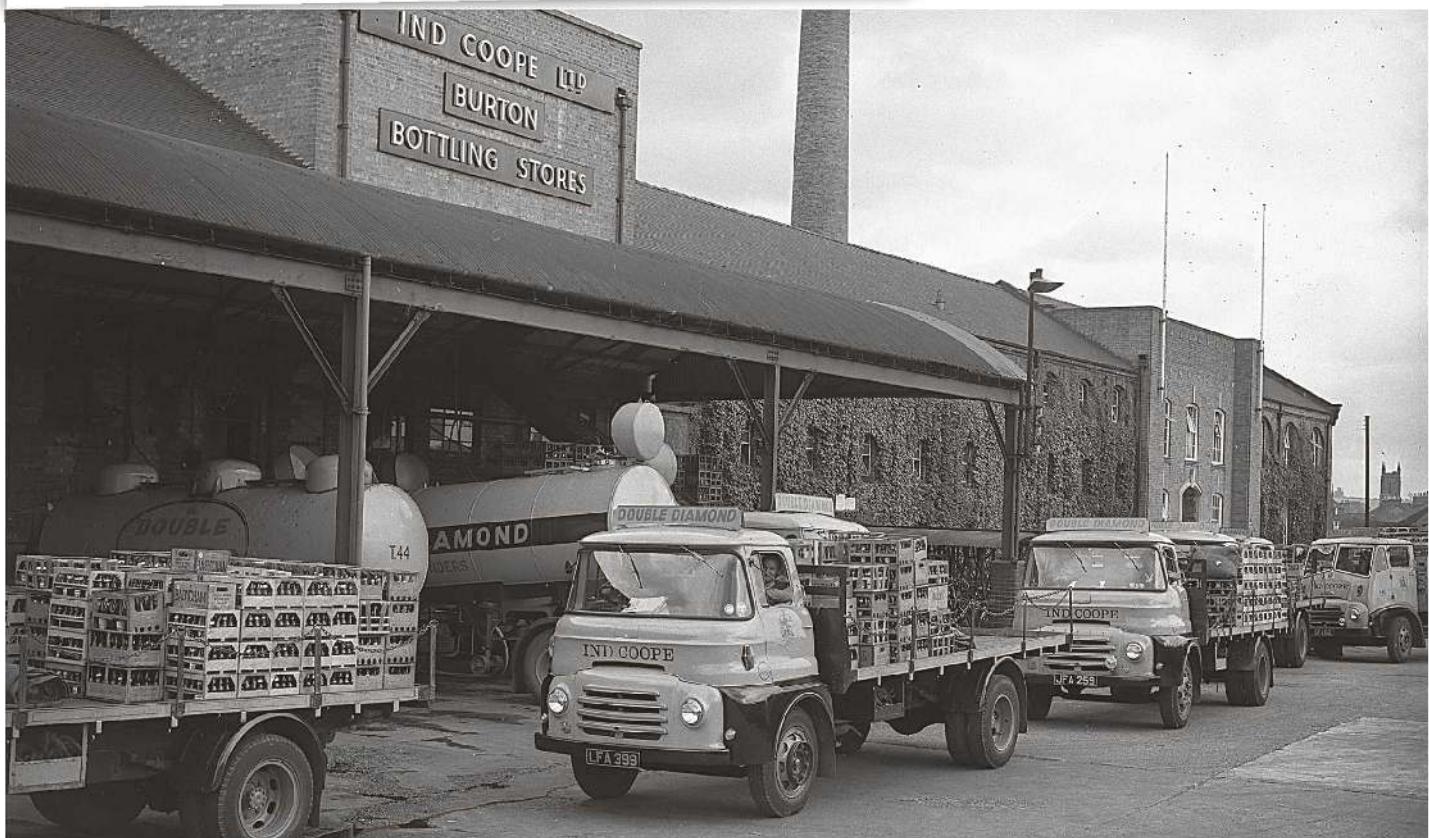




Above: Moving on to the later FFK models, here is a 7-ton long wheelbase platform lorry, badged as an Austin 702, 77 LHA (Smethwick, 1959), with the stylish (but rather meaningless?) 'Chance' fleetname, taking part in another LDOY event, this time believed to be in Essex. (CHC aaa565)

Left: Missing its front number plate, but dating from around 1960, this Austin 702 with a wooden tipper body, in the fleet of Male & Son, the Brierley Hill haulage contractor, was photographed being loaded by the International Drott loader, while the manager talked to the driver. (CHC aas201)

Below: This FFK with the Morris-style grille, but missing its badge, LFA 399 (Burton-on-Trent, 1960), was one of several similar vehicles in use as drays in the fleet of Ind Cope, along with earlier and later models. (CHC aat995)



Right: Photographed in Scotland, along with various other Morris vans in the fleet of newspaper and magazine distributors John Menzies, this Morris FG box van, ESF 559C (Edinburgh, 1965), was loading at night for its early morning delivery round. (CHC abi341)



Below: This Morris FJ K140, ERH 761C (Hull, 1965), with a platform body, in the fleet of Wilkinson Bros Fish Transport of Hull, was an early example of the type, which was the first mass-produced lorry fitted with a tilt cab. (CHC abj575)



Below: This Morris FJ, MUY 380D (Worcestershire, 1966) had its chassis fitted with a third axle, probably by Boys or Primrose, to increase its capacity, for use as a 'bulk blower' and tipper by animal feed and grain supplier, Chaddesley Driers. (CHC abl125)



3 EASY WAYS TO ORDER

ONLINE - shop.kelsey.co.uk/heritagesale1

POST- SEND FORMS TO

Subscriptions FREEPOST RTKZ-HYRL-CCZX, Kelsey Publishing Ltd., Cudham Tithe Barn, Berry's Hill, Cudham, Kent, TN16 3AG

CALL- 01959 543 747

and quote offer code heritagesale1
Lines open Monday - Friday 8.00am - 6.00pm

YES! I would like to take advantage of these special discounted prices.
Please start my subscription with the first magazine to:

Magazine	No. Issues	£
Magazine	No. Issues	£
Magazine	No. Issues	£

This subscription is for myself This is a gift subscription

YOUR DETAILS

Mrs/Ms/Miss/Mr Forename

Surname

Address

..... Post code

Daytime phone Mobile

Email

IF DELIVERY IS TO A DIFFERENT ADDRESS, COMPLETE BELOW

Mrs/Ms/Miss/Mr Forename

Surname

Address

..... Post code

Daytime phone Mobile

Email

PAYMENT DETAILS

I enclose a cheque made payable to Kelsey Publishing Limited
for the sum of £.....

Please debit £ from Visa Visa Debit MasterCard

Card number 

Security number 

Valid from / Expiry date /

Signature Date

JANUARY SALE NOW ON

SAVE ON MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTIONS



**6 issues for £19.99
12 issues for £34.99**

SHOP.KELSEY.CO.UK/HERITAGESALE1

WHY SUBSCRIBE

Visit shop.shop.kelsey.co.uk/carsale1 or call 01959543747 and quote offer code HSALE1
Prices quoted are for UK delivery only.

SALE

SAVE
40%^{UP TO}
TODAY

TOP FOR ARCHIVE
PICTURES

» Selling Lorries -
1950s Advertising » British
Scotland

TOP FOR ARC
PICTURE

V
Ro
www.roadscene.com

TIPPI
www.roadscene.com

VINTAGE ROADSCENE

Issue 228 November 2018 £4.50

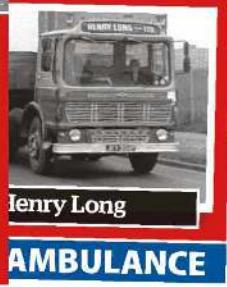
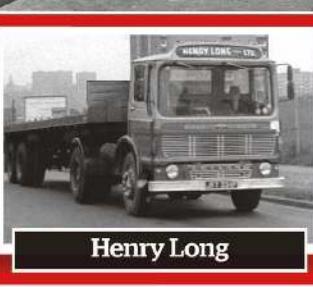
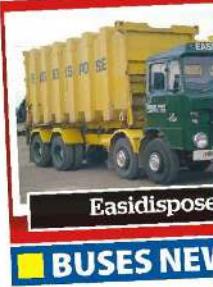
TIPPERS On Show & At Work

SALE
FROM
JUST
£19.99

in
and
118 £4.50

9 770265 991187
New
York

9 770265 991467



EASIDISPOSE

Easidispose

Those were the Drays

Henry Long

Henry Long

AMBULANCE

- Treat yourself and save up to 40%
- Free delivery direct to your door
- Be the first to read exclusive content
- Exciting monthly offers inside

HURRY
THIS SALE
MUST END
SOON!

KENT INDEPENDENCE

Allan Bedford continues the story of Monty Hever and Darenth Coaches post-war – and the saga behind some of his unique fleet.

The first Brown bodied Austin K4/CXB, KKN 237, new in April 1948, with chassis No 106994, is seen when new along with the 1937 Dodge. This was re-bodied post-war, probably by Brown, and down-seated to 14.

**PART
TWO**



Post-war Recovery and the Austins

With the pent-up demand for leisure travel in the immediate post-war period and a long waiting list for PSV chassis and someone to body them, all operators faced the same problems. A bodywork and sheet metal fabrication works in Dartford, Thos Brown & Sons, just a few minutes' walk from the large Beadle works, provided a local solution.

The Austin 'K' range – known as the Birmingham Bedford – was launched in early 1939, with a handful of PSVs being built later that year. With a steady supply of chassis coming on-stream from 1948, Austin coaches were built in considerable numbers, including sole examples by village coachbuilders. Brown was able to supply four CXBs, and later bodied a Bedford OB for Southlands of Bromley.

In 1950, the Brown family, realising the potential demand for coach travel obtained two wartime Bedford OW chassis and built



Above: A rear view of KKN 237 on delivery.



Right: The inside story, the period luxury of the first Austin.

two further bodies, and Browns Luxury Coaches was born. Although no further home grown vehicles were built, a few new and second-hand coaches joined the fleet until they gave this venture up in 1957. The company then concentrated on the development of a Rootes Dealership in the town. The bodies built by Browns proved quite stylish unlike many local efforts. Monty's examples, all 29-seaters, joined the fleet between April 1948 and January 1950.

The first one, KKN 237, was the subject of a 'photo-shoot' when new, but only stayed for three years before being traded in to Sparshatts, in June 1951. In the same month, Reading & Co. Ltd of Portsmouth supplied the second of a pair of Dennis Lancets, which proved to be the final new vehicles purchased, and once again, were quite a rare combination from this small producer.

A regular summer private hire during this

period was the annual seaside outing for the bakery workers and families of H L Groom & Son, of Erith. The destination varied, but was usually one of the Thanet resorts, with up to five coaches picking up outside the large Belmont Road Bakery on a Saturday morning.

A twenty seat Austin K2, EAP 520, new in 1948 to an East Sussex operator, later moving to Huntingdon, joined the Eynsford fleet in October 1954. This was the only 'K' Series known to have been bodied by Stanhay of Ashford, Kent, a company better-known in the agricultural world. Other second-hand purchases up to the end of the 1950s included a Yeates-bodied Dennis Lancet and a stylish re-bodied Leyland Tiger PS1. Examples of WTB, OWB and OB Bedfords, all quite 'run of the mill', were also added to the fleet. However, in typical Hever style, one final leap into the 'unknown' was

Thos. Brown & Sons.

HOME GARDENS, DARTFORD



Passenger and Commercial Motor Body Builders and Repairs

Phone: DARTFORD 2351

Above: Thos Brown succeeded in making this late example of a Fordson 7V pantechnican look attractive for a Blackheath contractor, working for the mighty Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society.

the arrival in October 1953 of an Opel!

The Opel and its brief popularity

Opel of Germany, part of General Motors since March 1929, began to import an increasing number of cars and commercials to the UK via Southampton in 1935. A new truck plant was established in Brandenburg near Berlin in 1936, where the Blitz ('Lightning') was produced and initially fitted with a side-valve motor. The cars were sold here at rock bottom (ie dumped) prices, with the Cadet (Kadett) in particular becoming quite popular, the main London distributor, Pride & Clarke of Brixton, offering them at just £135. Examples were still to be seen in the late 1950s.

For 1937, a new 3.5 litre OHV engine



Above left: Austin K4, KKN 237, is seen in sparkling condition, with the Rolls Royce behind.

Above right: The Tudor Cottage on Eynsford Riverside again; at the front is the last of the Austins, MKK 710, new in 1950, seen with another Austin and, at the rear, a Bedford WTB, believed to be a Duple example, FLE 509, new in March 1939 to Banfields and part of the Darenth fleet from 1949 to 1951.

Right: The second of the Austins, new in July 1949, LKJ 521, chassis No 115157, is seen at an unknown location in company with a Walls Ice Cream van.

derived from the latest Chevrolet equivalent was introduced and fitted to an uprated 3-ton range. This comprised the 136 inch wheelbase (6W) and the 142 in (7W) truck chassis and a coach chassis (8W) with a 183 in wheelbase and double drop frame. These were imported through the GM plant at Southampton, along with Chevrolet, GMC and Oldsmobile trucks for the UK market.

A rival German maker, Hansa-Lloyd also imported commercials in the same period, with the sole concessionaires based in North-west London offering petrol or diesel-powered dropsiders.



Left: A party of young men, members of the Central Council for Physical Education (Kent Branch) depart on a tour with the rear seats piled with utility brown suitcases. This is the last of the Austins, MKK 710, given as a 29-seat model K3/YB, chassis No 29919, registered in January 1950.



At the Earls Court Show in November 1937, the Opel stand, No 110, included a pantechnican for Osbornes Removals of Manchester, which already had an example of the equivalent Bedford WTL in its fleet. A bare coach chassis was also displayed, offered at £295, or complete with Duple 26-seat coachwork at £825. This compared well with the quoted price for a 1937 Bedford WTB/Duple Vista, as a chassis at £290 or £825 complete. General Motors however, appear to have avoided using the Blitz model name for the UK market and a few carried



Above left: The first of the pair of Dennis Lancet J10 models, with Reading of Portsmouth coachwork, is captured when quite new in late 1951 or early 1952 in Dartford Market Place. Two trolleybuses on the LT route 696 to Woolwich can be seen standing at the original terminus. This was re-positioned next to the Museum in August 1952. The distinctive building on the left was at that time the location of F W Woolworth. It is now the home of 'Dartfordian', Len Goodman's Dance Studio.

Above right: The second Dennis Lancet J10 is seen at the Coronation Garage. Note the 'Company of Veteran Motorists' badge below the grille. (PM)





Above: The attractive lines of the Reading-bodied Lancets seen from the rear. (PM)

GM on their radiator grilles. With five speeds and helically-cut gears the Opels must have given a less tuneful ride than the Bedford equivalent.

Surviving records indicate that approximately 50 Opel PSVs were built, with Duple constructing approximately a third of the total, with at least a further four coach builders involved. The first examples took to the road in 1937, but the majority were registered in the early months of 1938, in time for the summer season.

The Bristol area became their stronghold with 'Clifton Greys' taking twelve Duple-bodied examples and two other operators two each. In 1948, Clifton Greys became part of the newly-formed 'Wessex Coaches Ltd'. This company accumulated further second-hand examples, up to a fleet strength of 19. These gave good service, but by the mid-1950s were naturally being disposed of.

The Hever example was new to France's of Market Weighton, in the East Riding of Yorkshire (Incidentally the birthplace of Britain's tallest man, William Bradley). It was fitted with an Arthur Mulliner of Northampton 27-seat body. Mulliner, a builder of luxury car coachwork, and not to be confused with Mulliner of Birmingham, turned to the coach market in the late 1930s. The styling might be interpreted as 'avant garde' and, at the 1937 Commercial Show an early Maudslay Marathon in this style was shown on Stand 89. The France's Opel later migrated South to Bristol to join Wessex and, after disposal, moved to Kent. Possibly the only example owned by a Kent operator, it was soon on the school runs and private hires and gave another 3½ years' service.

A new garage and the final years

Having obtained a piece of land fronting the village High Street, the fully equipped Coronation Garage was operational by 1953, replacing Little Mote. Modern facilities included a steam cleaner and several local operators, including Clubbs of Wilmington, Margo's of Bexleyheath, Davis of Sevenoaks and Banfields, brought their coaches over for service and attention. By 1954, Monty's son, John was driving the school buses and took a leading role in the busy workshop.

During this period, the giant BP Oil Refinery on the Isle of Grain was under construction,

Above: A period advert from Motor Transport for the new OpeI PSV, promoted by General Motors

and to transport the hundreds of workers to the isolated complex, an assortment of operators, with a fascinating selection of old buses were seen on a daily basis. Banfields large contract fleet, including its many elderly Leylands, gleaned from a variety of fleets, became heavily involved.

In 1956, a second phase of construction to double the refinery's capacity, required ever more works buses. At this point, Monty purchased an ex-Ribble 1940 Leyland TD7, RN 8981, with Leyland 53-seat lowbridge body, and helped Banfields out when needed.



Above: Seen around 1960 at the Tower of London on a school summer trip, Dennis Lancet, JOR 486, has a Scammell Scarab, Standard 10 Companion, Singer Roadster and what is possibly a Thames/Burlingham of Ronsway Coaches for company. (PM)



Above left: To highlight the apparent popularity of the Opel in the Bristol area just before World War II, I have included this remarkable photograph. It shows the 'Tramway Centre' in August 1939, just before the last routes using this terminus were replaced by new buses, and less than a month before the conflict. The Victorian trams share the road with a new Bristol 'K', three Flying Standards, a Hillman 14, Morris 8 Series 2, a lovely Vauxhall J Type 14, plus a long wheelbase Opel dropside (without grille badge). Already looking well used, it carries a March 1939 Bristol registration.

Above right: Former Clifton Greys and Wessex, 1938 Opel/Duple, chassis No 8W8094, stands hoping for a buyer, believed to be at Thurgood of Ware in 1956. In 1931, Clifton Greys chose another lost cause for their fleet, purchasing six examples of the Bristol-built BAT Cruiser (See Vintage Roadscene 208, March 2017) (PM)

Right: John Hever is steam-cleaning the ex-Ribble Leyland TD7 alongside a Bedford 'OWB' of 1942, ex-Tappin of Wallingford CMO 537, which was purchased in 1959 and used for school work.



Above: Taking a rest from school duties, the Opel has a day out in Hastings on Sunday, 13th June 1954. The 1950 Dennis Lancet J3 alongside is from the fleet of 'Hounslow Star'. Parked at the familiar beachside Fish Market coach park, this area now houses an Art Gallery. (PM/RC)



1: The Opei, chassis No 8W8915, with a full compliment of 27 gentlemen, about to depart from the Duchess of Kent in Brook Street, Erith. Our family lived opposite this pub for 33 years, and were amazed when this wonderful photo turned up on social media recently. The attractive turreted pub still trades and was a Charrington House for decades; a Toby Ale sign can be seen by the door.

2: Parked on the Embankment in London, with Shell House glimpsed across the River Thames, this Leyland PS1 started life in Manchester. In 1952, its original Harrington body was replaced by this well-proportioned Plaxton 'Venturer'. Coming to Eynsford in 1956, it was sold to Pilchers of Chatham in 1962, on the closure of the coach fleet. (PM)

3: Hevers links with the Banfield fleet included service facilities at the Eynsford Garage. Seen aloft, this updated coach is a typical example of a Banfield hybrid. A 1939 Leyland Tiger TS8, new to the West Riding Automobile Co of Wakefield, as a 32-seat Roe-bodied bus, HL 9075, it came south around 1953 and approximately two years later was fitted with this post-war Duple body, originally a half cab. The transformation was completed with the fitting of a 'Burlingham' style full-front (the body had previously been fitted to a Lewis of Greenwich Maudslay Marathon, which had received a new Duple Vega in its place). Fare-paying passengers might have been fooled into thinking they were travelling on a modern coach! Despite all this, it went for scrap in 1958. A 1946 Bedford 'OB', CRX 857, is seen alongside and was in the Darenth fleet for just nine months, September 1957 to June 1958, new to a Wantage operator.

4: The first of three pre-war Leyland Titans ex-Ribble Motor Services, this TD7 joined the fleet in 1956 and was fitted with a platform door by Hever. Seen in the yard in 1960-1, it displays an advert for the garage's pre-MOT inspection work. The Jeep alongside must have been an early 'demob' and carries a 1946/7 Wiltshire registration. (PM)

5: This 1950 Bedford 'OB', new to Burton Cars of Brixham, joined the Darenth fleet in 1957 and was used on the free hospital bus service, during the prolonged London bus strike of 1958. Seen with suitable identification, it was one of nine 'OBs' to join the fleet between 1957 and 1959. (PM)

6: Here we see an in-service photo of Ribble, fleet No 1790, RN 8174, before joining the Hever fleet. It is pictured in Blackburn, bound for Feniscowles. Note the advert for the town's finest ale, Duttons 'O-B-J' (Oh Be Joyful); a small Austin 'K' Series Pantechnican passes behind. (JS)



1: In May 1960 the ex-Ribble 1937 Leyland TD5, RN 8174, with post-war ECW lowbridge body came south and is seen with a full load of school children. (JW) 2: The final ex-Ribble Leyland, this time a 1934 TD4, joined the fleet in October 1960 and displays an advert for the company's service facilities, used by most South-east London PSV operators. Behind can be seen an ultra rare Duple 'Elizabethan' bodied Sentinel 'SLC' of Lewis, Greenwich. (JW) 3: This attractive Austin Ambulance of the Farningham St John's Brigade was new in 1939, and was duly blessed by the local vicar when new (Ref 'Topfoto'). In 1959, it was refurbished by John Hever at Coronation Garage. 4: The Hever family were very keen Jaguar enthusiasts and members of the Jaguar Drivers Club. Here their 1952/3 MK7 gets a blast, note the pair of 'company veteran motorist badges'. 5: For recovery work, a Morris Commercial CB Quad Guntractor was purchased and is seen towing a stricken Burlingham-bodied AEC of Swinards of Ashford, Kent on the A20, with the aid of a towing ambulance. The coach was new in March 1946 to Don Everall of Wolverhampton on chassis no 06624764, as a Burlingham 33-seater. In 1952 it received a new 37-seat Seagull style body. After leaving Everalls it was owned by Lewis of Paiton and moved to Ashford in August 1958. 6: The towing ambulance. 7: To show how popular the area was before mass car ownership, Londoners flocked to the area on summer Sundays to get a breath of country air. Seen in Farningham High Street around 1954 the poor LT inspector has somehow to conjure up sufficient No 21s to clear this lot. Dartford-based green RT4166 and a Guy Special, plus a few cars, including the inevitable Morris 8 (CYL=London 1936) squeeze past.





1



2



3



4

1: Little Moat Barn still exists, as seen in this photo from John Gee taken in August 2018. (JW)

2: Swanley Bus Garage, built in 1925 for East Surrey, is still used for its intended purpose as seen in this photo from May 2018. The last LT bus left here on 31st December 1969, and after many changes over the past forty years, the later art deco office block on the left, added in the 1930s in the Charles Holden style, survives.

3: Although a builder of bus and coach bodies at various times, Jeffreys of Swansea, which bodied the W&G, was associated with both Ford and Duple during the 1930s, as shown on this photo of a smart Ford 'BB' seen in Swansea. After the war, the company built bodies on Austin 'K' Series chassis, producing seven examples.

4: A surviving Bean bus with London connections seen in soggy Brighton in May 1991. Fitted with a Birch 14-seat body, it was supplied to Henry Turner in January 1929, for a service between Barnes and Richmond Park.

In May 1958, a disastrous strike by London Transport bus crews, which dragged on for seven weeks, caused misery to millions and affected both the LT Central bus and trolleybus network and the 'green' country and Greenline routes. The residents of the local villages between Dartford and Eynsford still relied on trunk route 401, as car ownership was still in the minority. Apart from work and shopping, those needing to visit relatives in the many hospitals in Dartford were unable to see their loved ones. In a wonderful example of generosity, Monty and his men volunteered to provide a free service through the valley using two coaches on Sunday afternoons – in those days hospital visiting times were very restricted. A local newspaper report at the time stated police patrol cars and motor-cycles were active in keeping an eye on the coaches. The strike had no winners and an already contracting LT went on to make more service cuts and fleet reductions.

Two further ex Ribble pre-war Leyland Deckers were added in 1960, which proved to be the last purchases and also proved popular for school trips.

With the introduction by Ernest Marples of the MOT Test in September 1960, the Eynsford Garage boasted the most modern testing facilities in North-west Kent. It also offered Crypton electronic engine tuning to diagnose faults and reset to makers' standards, wheel alignment and dynamic brake testing for car owners.

With Monty reaching normal retirement age, the decision was taken to wind up Darenth Coaches, with the final six vehicles departing in October 1962. However, the garage continued to thrive, managed by John Hever. Monty passed away in 1970.

After the Hevers left, German Bomag rollers were assembled there for the UK market. Later it became a fashionable pine furniture store for a while, before demolition and re-development for housing.

Acknowledgments with thanks to the following:

Helen Petulla (Hever Family), Dr Susan Pittman (FELHS), John Gee, Richard Rosa, Phil Moth – PM Photography (PM), John Shearman (JS), Bob Cook (RC), Derek Jones, Dawson Sloper, Peter Brown, Viv Corbin, Andrew Porter, Barry Lucking, Peter Tulloch, Chris Newman, John Watts (JW), Bob Crawley (WHOTT Archive)

Bibliography

- **East Surrey by Bell Street** (HJ Publications, 1974)
- **London Buses, Blacker/Lunn/ Westgate** (HJ Publications, 1977)
- **The Motor Services of Kent & East Sussex, Eric Baldock** (Meresborough Books, 1985)
- **Vintage Lorry Album No 1, Nick Baldwin (MHB)**
- **The Bean, Jonathan Wood** (Shire Publications, 2001)
- **Who is this Mr Wilberjim** (D & J Watts, 2017)
- **Austin 'K' Series Bus & Coaches, John Carman, 2014**
- **A Farming Century, William G G Alexander** (Quiller Press, 1991)
- **A Village at War, D G Burcham** (Farningham & Eynsford Local History Society, 1995) Commercial Motor Archive

YORKSHIRE WOOLLENS

Stuart Emmett has sent us some pictures as a follow-up to the recent articles on Henry Long of Bradford, showing wool-carrying lorries in Yorkshire, to which we've added another from Bernard Coomber.

A 1958 Thames Trader with a third-axle extension, OKY xxx, no 77 in the J G Fielder fleet, with a good load of bales of wool. The driver is throwing the rope to his mate on top of the load, to secure the top layers in the accustomed manner, from front to back.



The area around Bradford in West Yorkshire was traditionally known for the production of woollen goods. Henry Long was just one of the local hauliers who specialised in the movement of bales of wool and cloth between the mills and their customers. Other well-known names from the past were also involved, like J G Fielder, James C Ashworth and Joe Dean, as seen here.

The lorries usually were fitted with an over-the-cab extension, to allow a greater cargo space, which was loaded with bales several high, platform vehicles being preferred, as the loading was generally by crane from above, the bales coming out from the upper floors of the textile mills.

One of Ashworth's AECs was frequently seen on the preservation scene for many years, to remind us of this particular style of vehicle, now a memory, along with most of the woollen mills they served. So here are pictures of a few more lorries to remind us of the Yorkshire Woollen District, which even gave its name to one of the local area bus companies...



Above: A Leyland Hippo, GLV 611 (Liverpool, 1946), no 90 in the fleet of J G Fielder (Haulage) Ltd, with branches in Bradford, Leeds, Liverpool and London, seen outside the company's depot, showing evidence of a hard working life, as well as the style of body, with the extension over the cab supported from the substantial front bumper. (Stuart Emmett Collection, unless otherwise stated)



Above left: Fielder's fleet no 56 was an ERF 68G eight-wheeler, KKU 357 (Bradford, 1954), complete with the customary platform body and extension, carrying a good load of bales, something like a total of 90, well roped-down. **Above Right:** Not a very good picture, but this shows a J G Fielder Thames Trader six-wheeler, possibly the same one, with what might be termed a 'part-load' of wool bales. Like the Leyland Hippo, it shows evidence of plenty of hard work.

Left: An AEC Mammoth Major Mk III on the fleet of James C Ashworth Ltd of Bradford. It has the same style of platform body with over-the-cab extension, which looks wider than the chassis - a later 8ft body on a 7 ft 6 ins chassis, perhaps, looking a bit 'top-heavy' rather like some re-bodied buses did. Fleet no 120 looks to be registered GGA 944 (Glasgow, 1948), suggesting it could have been a second-hand purchase for the operator.



Above: We can't see the registration number of this Albion Reiver six-wheeler, in the fleet of Joe Dean of Greetland, Halifax, but this would have been a later vehicle. It was photographed in wintry conditions, with a good load of bales, ready to be covered with those sheets sitting on top of the cab and roped down, ready for its journey. (Bernard Coomber)

Rally Round-up

Here we are with the final round-up of the rallies which our contributors visited during 2018.

Halloween Run

Keith Baldwin found himself heading into Yorkshire for his last commercial road run of 2018. The Halloween Road Run from Huddersfield was held on 28th October, with a nice start to the day before, true to form, the clouds rolled in and a couple of showers made guest appearances, although they stopped in time for the run, although it was still very cold. Keith says it doesn't seem 12 months ago that he was reporting on the same gathering.

Andy Taylor also went over to Yorkshire for the run, and sent us pictures taken at the refreshment stop at the Carriage House at Standedge. We'll have a few more pictures from Roy Dodsworth next month...



Above: Seen leaving Huddersfield at the start is 1971 Albion Reiver six-wheeled tipper, GJD 273J. (KB)



Above: This 1983-4 Cummins-powered Seddon Atkinson 401, A214 KFK, restored in BRS Truck Rental livery, was on the run pulling a skeletal trailer and 20 ft 'box'. (KB)



Above: Restored with a breakdown crane, this Leyland Beaver, XNN 206H, was originally part of the Steetley fleet. (KB)



Above: A 1975 Ford D Series 16 ton tipper, JAT 85N, restored in the livery of John Riley & Sons, based near Buxton. (KB)



Lined up outside The Carriage House are Volvo FH12, M134 MEE, of Simon Howard of Ossett, ERF EC12 recovery vehicle, M175 MBA, in Yorkshire Rider bus company colours, and Cat-powered Foden 4000, S649 FFM. (AT)



Above: A more recent preserved vehicle, T312 KLD, a Foden 4000 Series tractor unit, 'The Cheshire Cat' (does that refer to a Caterpillar engine?) now in the colours of DRS Transport, from Hyde, Cheshire. (KB)



Above: You can almost hear the Gardner 150 growling as this KV-cabbed ballast tractor, HSU 840, from the preserved fleet of ERFs of S Roper & Sons, based in South Yorkshire, makes its way over the moors, with a tribute to Poppy Day, 'Lest We Forget'. (KB)



Above: One of several ERFs on the run, this Cummins-powered C Series, B435 WFJ, was in the colours of Ward Bros of Lepton. (KB)



Above: Approaching The Carriage House refreshment stop, we see Scammell 15MU artic tanker, OLU 302, in the livery of N M Stafford & Sons of Houghton le Spring, Co Durham. (AT)



Above: With the moors in the background, here is BMC Laird, RMS 688G, in Cheshire Haulage livery, carrying a vintage Fordson tractor. (AT)



Above: It wasn't all heavies on the run. Now something of a rarity, this LDV Pilot dropside pick-up, N810 PJU, looked in fine fettle, parked at The Carriage House. (AT)



Above: Several of the bigger vehicles line up at the refreshment stop. (AT)



Above: A smart-looking ERF EC11 double-drive tractor unit, J3 RMX, in Readymix-Huddersfield livery, with the hills in the background. (AT)



Above: The LAD-cabbed Leyland Super Comet, 476 BWR, of Ivor Owen & Sons, from Wrexham, parked next to Foden Alpha, BV52 XJL. (AT)



Above: Joining the bigger commercials on the run were Austin A30 saloon, PFF 479, and Mini-van, JVF 112D. (AT)

More Than Models

Andy Taylor visited the Heavy Equipment Model Show (HEMS), at Burnley Football Club's Turf Moor Stadium on 21st October, and found a good selection of real lorries outside, as well as a fine collection of models on display.



- 7: Restored in the livery of Sam Longson of Chapel-en-le-Frith is this S21-cabbed Foden four-wheeled tipper.
- 8: This model of the Pacific in the fleet of heavy haulier, Elliott Bros of York, stood out among many other heavy haulage tractor and trailer models.
- 9: Part of a realistic 'diorama' layout featuring all sorts of models of vehicles in D & H Plant Hire livery.
- 10: A great classic toy in more ways than one, one of the large scale, pressed steel lorries from Tri-ang, a Thames Trader low-loader, carrying a model crane in the same series.



Above: Mike Gosling photographed this 1965 Scammell Highwayman, converted to a 6x2 by S Harrison & Sons, the well-known Sheffield haulier, preserved in working condition, at the Newark AEC Rally.



Above: Seen at Holbeach by Mike, Leyland Beaver, GFL 183, was new to Allens Transport in 1958, which sold out the Humber McVeigh of Grimsby. It passed to farmer, Gordon Charity of Deeping St James, and has been preserved since 1994 in its last working condition.



Above: An older Leyland Beaver, AXD 968, new to Hovis in 1934 with a van body, then worked on the 'Mulberry Harbour' for 'D-Day', seen with a Leyland FG at Holbeach.



Above: The Whitwell & Reepham Railway in Norfolk uses this ERF EC6 four-wheeler, MM852 FKH, on maintenance duties.



Above: Also photographed at Whitwell station by Mike was CYC 476, A Morris-Commercial CS 11/30 bus, originally used in Somerset and later in Norfolk and now slowly being restored again by the railway.

Wirral Tram & Bus Show

The 21st Wirral Tram & Bus Show was held on 7th October at Birkenhead. **Keith Baldwin** was there and says there was a good turn-out of vehicles at the rally, with a nice selection running trips around the locale, and the usual stands selling transport-related items.



1: A 1949 Leyland Tiger PS1 with Harrington 'Dorsal Fin' C33F body, originally delivered to Blue Motors of Minehead, restored in the livery of its second operator, Scarlet Pimpernel, also of Minehead, after time with Corona coaches and Mulley's of Ixworth.

2: This 1946 Guy Vixen tower wagon, GKD 317, was used by Liverpool Corporation for tramway overhead repairs.

3: This Duple-bodied Bedford OB, GWS 139, was new in 1949 to Read & Mackay of Edinburgh, but is now restored in Crosville colours.

4: An early Leyland National, WFM 816L, of 1972, restored to its original Crosville livery as fleet no SNL816.

5: This early MCW-bodied Leyland Atlantean, FHF 456, dating from 1959, is one of 3 survivors of 30 delivered to Wallasey Corporation, but restored in the livery of the Wirral Division of Merseyside Passenger Transport Executive (MPTE), by the St Helens Transport Museum.

6: A later Crosville bus, in a later style livery, B200 DTU, a 1985 Leyland Olympian with Eastern Coachworks bodywork.

7: One of the post-deregulation liveries which actually improved the look of the buses it was applied to was that of Wilts & Dorset, in which 1980 Bristol VRT/ECW KRU 855W has been restored.

8: Equally far from its original home was this 1990 Leyland Olympian with Northern Counties body, operated by Grey Green on London Transport services.

Dewsbury Bus Museum

Keith Baldwin's last rally of the season was at the Dewsbury Bus Museum on 18th November. He says: "The years seem to pass more quickly, the older he becomes. A nice selection of buses was on show and also working the 10 minute shuttle service to Dewsbury bus station, while a good selection of items was on offer from a number of stalls. Here's to next year..."



Above: Looking a little grubby at the museum was JHL 983, a 1957 AEC Reliance with Roe Dalesman body in West Riding livery.



Above: This 1952 Leyland Tiger PS2 with Roe body, EHL 344, is another of the West Riding fleet preserved.



Above: This was the last Leyland National built. C49 OCM has been restored in the livery of Halton Borough Council, to which it was new in 1985. Strange to think this bus is now more than 30 years old...



Above: An even younger bus preserved is Y993 VRH, a 2001 Plaxton-bodied Dennis Dart from the East Yorkshire fleet.



Above: A 1984 Leyland Tiger with Alexander N Type body, originally Ulsterbus DXI 3341, preserved as 4993 UG, in Howards Coaches Lilford Traveller livery.



Above: This Leyland Tiger PS1, HD 7905, Yorkshire Woollen District fleet no 622, is thought to be the only survivor of a batch of 75 of these Brush-bodied single-deck buses.



Above: Another West Riding vehicle, LHL 164F, is a 1967 Leyland Panther, again with Roe bodywork.



Above: A 1962 Leyland Leopard with Weymann single-deck bodywork, PJX 35, restored in the attractive livery of its original operator, Halifax Corporation.

PICTURES FROM AUSTRALIA

I collected these photos (and many more) many years ago while growing up in Mount Gambier and Horsham, Australia, and you are welcome to use them.

My father, Colin McNamara, and I both worked in the road transport industry all of our working lives. In the early days, Dad drove for a number of transport companies, before getting into new truck sales with International Harvester at Horsham, Victoria, and later Rocklea, Brisbane. While Dad worked with trucks, I worked with trailers. I started my working life with Marshall Lethlean, Brisbane then Fruehauf Trailers, Rocklea and Townsville, before helping to form a company called Trailer Sales (NQ) Pty Ltd in 1988, which we sold to Freightliner Maxi-CUBE Queensland, Brisbane in 2009 (Freightliner & Maxi-CUBE are part of MaxiTRANS, the largest semi-trailer manufacturers in Australia).

Dad and I met you at Gaydon in June 2014. I think between Dad and I, we subscribe to almost every truck magazine printed from USA, England, Ireland & Australia – including Vintage Roadscene, of course.

Dave McNamara, Paradise Point, Queensland



International Transtar with livestock trailer.



Co-driver David McNamara with a New R Model Mack being delivered to Northern Transport, Alice Springs, Easter 1983.



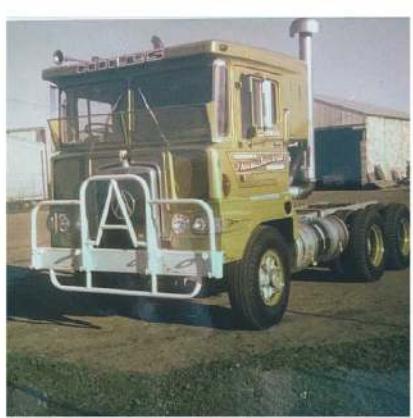
Leyland lettering replaces Scammell on this export Crusader tractor unit.



New Kenworth W924 at the Brisbane Truck Show. Bought by Northern Transport, Alice Springs.



Mack & International of Bill Sutherland from Mt Gambier.



New Atkinson for Hill's of Horsham.



New Mack Flintstone with a Freightliner aluminium tray body.



A tidy old Mack B61 with two new International Accos at Ipswich Truck & Tractor.



An old Mack (NR?) log hauler of N F McDonnell, Mt Gambier.



International with an outsize load.



Mack with a timber bogie in the back.



F Model Mack at Freighter Trailers (maybe Adelaide?). Note the new spread bogie trailer.



Mack B61 of a livestock carrier from Nhill, Victoria.



Diamond Reo and Freightliner dry freight van.



F Model Mack from Horsham.



International Transtar of Knights of Kilmore with a tanker trailer.



An Atkinson of Stawell Haulage – note the differences in the cab from the UK version.



Atkinson with the cab designed and built in Australia.



New International Acco arriving in Horsham (1974/5?).

MATTERS ARISING

Issue 229 of *Vintage Roadscene* was brilliant. I agree with you about the body on the Young & Co Dennis Pax on page 12, being built by Sparshatts. It has the same tubular steel sides as those built by Sparshatts for Watneys. The R Whites Ford Thames ET6 on page 15 was one of many owned by the company. I was born on the same road as the R Whites factory in Croydon, it was a very busy place. They owned factories in Camberwell, Southampton, Birmingham, and others. R Whites were acquired by Whitbread in 1969 and merged with Canada Dry. Instead of many factories employing hundreds of people, they became a label on a bottle.

Writing about R.Whites, there was also a Tizer factory in Croydon in the 1960s, I used to take the laundry there. They always gave us a bottle of Tizer every time we went. Glass bottles and wooden crates in those days. All the bottles looked half full, the bottom half was red liquid and the top half was clear liquid. You had to turn it upside down before drinking it. The Tizer lorries were Bedford OW types with the square bonnets. They must have been at least 15 years old.

When I was still working, I was going through Wandsworth High Street regularly at around 8 o'clock every morning. I would see the Youngs horse-drawn drays setting off on their rounds. The horses were terrified by motorists blowing their horns at them as they went off towards West Hill, it was cruel and not nice to see.

I enjoyed the Well-Known Names article, featuring London Brick and Crow Carrying. The Selfstak unloading machines used by LBC were first fitted to their AEC Marshal 6 wheelers, built to carry 7,000 bricks. The AEC Marshals had 8.3 litre engines, but they were changed to de-rated 12.47 litre engines with more torque. It turned

out to be a bad move, the extra torque destroyed the bearings in the rear axles. The only time I saw the famous Crow Carrying Scammell artics was on Silvertown Way, when I came off the Woolwich Ferry.

Once A Common Sight on page 38 was very good. The Morris J Type van on page 39 reminded me the first van I drove for a living was a Morris JB bread van. The Morris J Type had a side-valve engine and a three-speed gearbox, while the identical looking Morris JB had an ohv engine and a four-speed gearbox.

The Trojan 15cwt van on page 40 was one of three identical looking vans made in Croydon by Trojan. They were a petrol, a diesel, and a battery electric known as the 'Electrojan'. The electric motor and storage batteries were all located under the floor. The control box was under the bonnet. The Commer BF van on page 41 had a Humber Hawk petrol engine or a Standard Vanguard diesel engine.

The same engine was also used in the Standard Vanguard van and taxi, the Karrier Bantam 2-tonner, the Ferguson farm tractor, and the Austin FX3 taxi, retro-fitted by Birch Bros of Kentish Town. They converted so many, it forced BMC to make their own 2.2 litre diesel engine, which became fitted in 5 or 6 different BMC models. The Standard Vanguard was the first car in Britain to be made with a diesel engine option in 1954. There is so much interesting content in one issue.

H Daulby, Croydon

Thanks for your kind words and also for your regular letters, in which you always add some interesting information arising from our articles.

BEDFORD J TYPE

As a regular reader of *Vintage Roadscene* each month, I was particularly interested in reading the letter from John Gale of South Wales, regarding the Bedford J Types he used to drive in the old days for Williams Construction Co of Camberley in Surrey. I remember his firm very well, as my dad at the time was a driver for another local tipper firm, Harry A Coff, of nearby Ascot in Berkshire, who operated a number of Bedford J Types during the late 1950s and 1960s.

We used to do a lot of work around the Camberley area, including an excavation job at Blackbushe Aerodrome, which involved removing a lot of material from the site, when the airfield's runways were being converted back to civilian use from wartime. I recall that my dad and other drivers regularly raced each other down the runways for the next lorry load, great fun for a six year old as I was then. They had a very good cafeteria on the airfield, which we used, and I loved the food there. A good dinner, followed by apple pie and ice cream and iced lemonade (I thought I was in Heaven!)

I loved getting out in the lorry during the



holidays and on Saturday mornings, and Blackbushe Airfield being not far from central Camberley, I used to see the Williams Construction Bedford J Types a lot and always wondered how many lorries they had? Perhaps John Gale could tell me more if he reads this, as I also remember seeing a BMC FFK tipper in Williams Construction livery around Camberley, perhaps this was an odd man out among

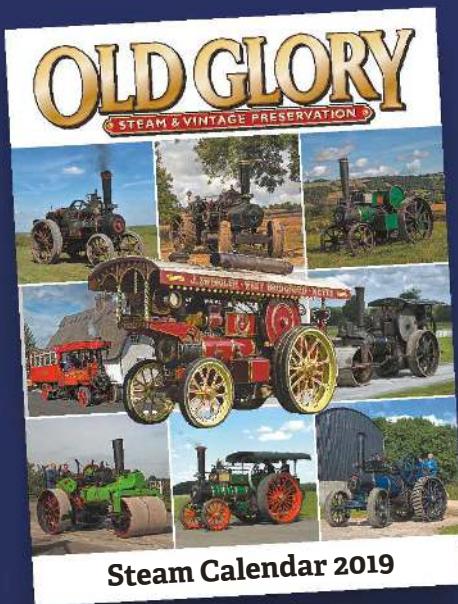
the Bedfords.

Mr Gale might also remember or know of the Hogs Back sand quarry, near Farnham, Surrey, as most of the tipper drivers would go there to collect sand and other materials.

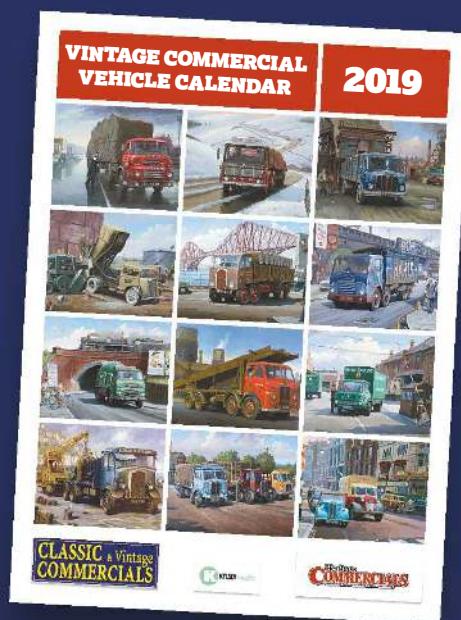
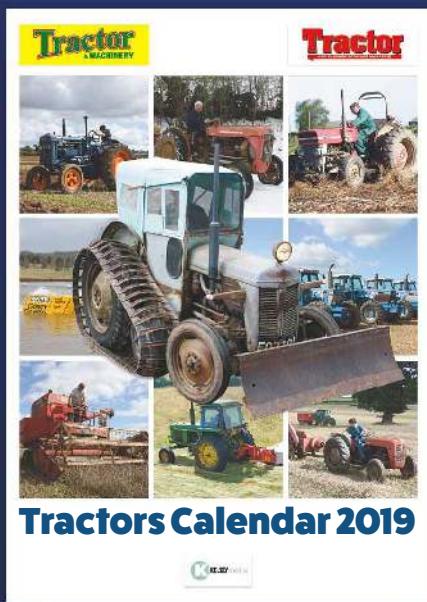
I enclose a photograph of my dad's Bedford J Type tipper in its heyday. I love the magazine. Keep up the good work.

Michael Clancy, Langley, Slough

2019 CALENDARS



Steam Calendar 2019



A MUST
FOR THE
WORKSHOP,
OFFICE OR
KITCHEN
WALL

- Large A3 format
- Wire bound
- Separate page for each month
- Exclusive images
- Plenty of space to add your rally dates and appointments!

JUST
£7.99*

INC P&P
(*UK delivery only)

HOW TO ORDER:

01959 543 747 (Mon-Fri 8.00am-6.00pm)

shop.kelsey.co.uk/cal19

COMMER MAXILOADS

I feel I have to write regarding Norman Chapman's article on the 'Pigeon Catcher'. I spent my younger years from 1955-66 working at Commer Cars, Luton, mainly in Engineering/Experimental, before going out on the road, as a Service Representative for the same company. I have never heard any of the TS3-powered vehicle referred to by this name before.

Now to correct some inaccuracies: the Maxiload was developed from the 'C' Range, ie the 7 and 8 ton vehicles with the TS3 engine, the original chassis having the QX cab. The 'V' Range followed on from the 'H' Range, using Perkins 'horizontal' – or rather 'inclined' c305 and 6.354 diesels. The 'V' Range having vertical engines, including six

cylinder petrol and for the lighter weight vehicles, the 4.236.

Now to the main point of this letter. The TS3 engine originally had a timing chain at the rear, to be later included for the Maxiload version, replaced by timing gears. The belt drive Norman refers to drove the compressor for the air brakes, as can clearly be seen from the picture at the bottom of page 29. This replaced the compressor previously driven from the con-rod/rocker arm, with an extended gudgeon pin.

The best tip for removing a broken blower drive shaft (if they broke correctly, they broke at the rear end) was a length of nylon/plastic hose, with two welding rods down it, and just arc it with the arc welder, having threaded it down from the front through the bushes.

Mr. J. D. Green,
Service Representative.
Commer Cars Ltd.
Premier Motors Ltd.
Telephone: Luton 32211.

As for the problem of carbon build-up, this was mainly caused by the use of incorrect oil. The recommended oil was Shell Rotella 'T' 20/20W. There were very few equivalents, but some operators used the equivalent of the ordinary Rotella oil, which was not the same (the T standing for two-stroke).

Thanks for the many reminiscences of the old Commers in this issue in particular, which bring back many memories. By the way, the Commer Superpoise pick-up on page 43 ended up as a service truck.

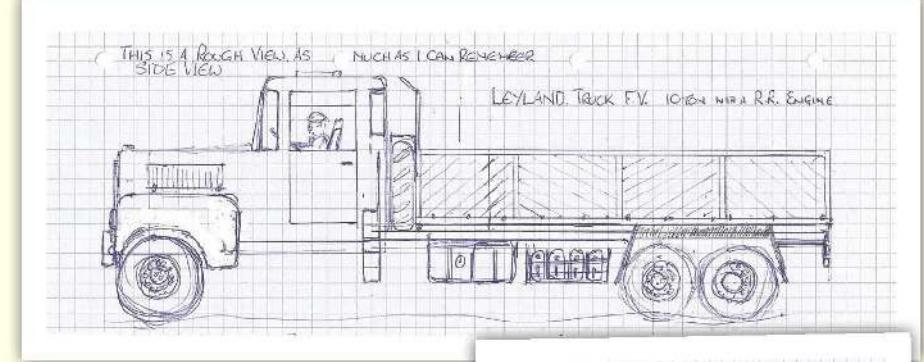
Ivan Green, Oulton Broad, Suffolk

LEYLAND ARMY LORRY

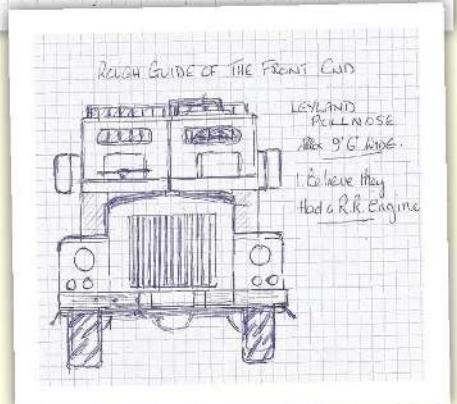
I wonder if there is any ex-soldier who served in Germany from 1963-4 onwards, who remembers the new Leyland 10 ton truck that replaced the 10 ton AECs which we used to drive. There must be quite a few lads out there, anyone that served in 21 Company RASC Hilden, or perhaps 11 Company, the sister company in Dortmund.

The drawing I've done is a rough guide to what it looked like. You did feature one a few months back, but it wasn't a very good photo, because it was in a scrapyard in a very bad condition. These FV (Fighting Vehicles) had power steering and brakes, you had plenty of room in the cabin to sleep length-wise across the cab and it was high enough to stand up in.

I had many photos of this vehicle, but



they got lost between Germany and the UK, when I got posted to re-join my old regiment. I sent a lot of my personal items home in a large box, called an MFO Box. It also had photos of my young days in 'Civvy Street'. Nine years of memories lost, photos, trophies, clothing and special military kit



that I purchased for my own personal use. The FV was 9 ft 6 ins wide, she was a big girl, so wide at the front end, we could only back the rear body into the garage whereas the AEC could be completely garaged. So the front end had to be left out.

I hope there will be some lads out there that have photos they can send to you and I hope you will print this in one of your issues.

B C Hearndon, Maidstone.

I think the lorry you are referring to is the Leyland Martian (as seen here at the Rushden Cavalcade), used by the army as a gun tractor, recovery vehicle and general cargo truck. Are there any ex-soldiers who can help with pictures?





Footman James
We share your passion

Insurance solutions* for classics and more.

Did you know with FJ+ you can tailor your policy from a range of cover options, including; **breakdown, agreed value and salvage retention?**

Call our friendly UK team for a quote.

0333 207 6022

or visit: footmanjames.co.uk



*All cover is subject to insurer's terms and conditions, which are available upon request. Footman James is a trading name of Towergate Underwriting Group Limited. Registered in England No. 4043759. Registered Address: Towergate House, Eclipse Park, Sittingbourne Road, Maidstone, Kent ME14 3EN. Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Telephone calls may be monitored or recorded. FP ADGE.1084.5.18

VINTAGE ROADSCENE

NA3T

ROAD TRANSPORT PHOTOS

1940s onwards - professionally printed from 80p inc P&P.
Free digital images available for Internet use
Catalogue of over 50,000 photos at

www.na3t.org/road

On-line or mail order

SAE: NA3T(VR), 14 Gannon Road, Worthing, BN11 2DT
eMail: info@na3t.org Phone: Bob 01903 235167
Land, sea or air negative collections purchased

Vintage
ROADSCENE

CLASSIC SPARES

Brake and clutch hydraulic spares for post 1935 classic and vintage buses, coaches and commercials. Kits for master cylinders, wheel cylinders and slave cylinders.

New and recon cylinders.

Brake hoses from stock or made to pattern.
Cylinder resleeving service and one off manufacture available.

Contact: Ian Wonnacott, Classic Spares,
The Forge, Fore Street, Kenton, Devon EX6 8LF.
Phone/Fax: 01626 891645
email: ian@classic-parts.co.uk
www.classic-parts.co.uk

To
Advertise in
Vintage
ROADSCENE
Call Talk Media
Sales On
**01732
445325**

TRANSCHEM

TRAINING LIMITED

Training Centres at
Warrington, Wakefield
and Mobile

ADR, DCPC, Forklift and DGSA
Consultants

Full ADR including Tank
Module and Class 1 Explosives
with 35 Hours DCPC £600

Tel: 0151 488 0961 / 07915 610232
www.transchemtraining.com

The next issue of *Vintage Roadscene* will be on sale
from the 15th February



CPA Services Ltd

Vintage & Classic Radiator Restoration for the
Commercial Vehicle, Bus & Coach Enthusiast
Quality radiator restoration and repair service.
For prompt personal service and advice please
contact Jess Dilley.

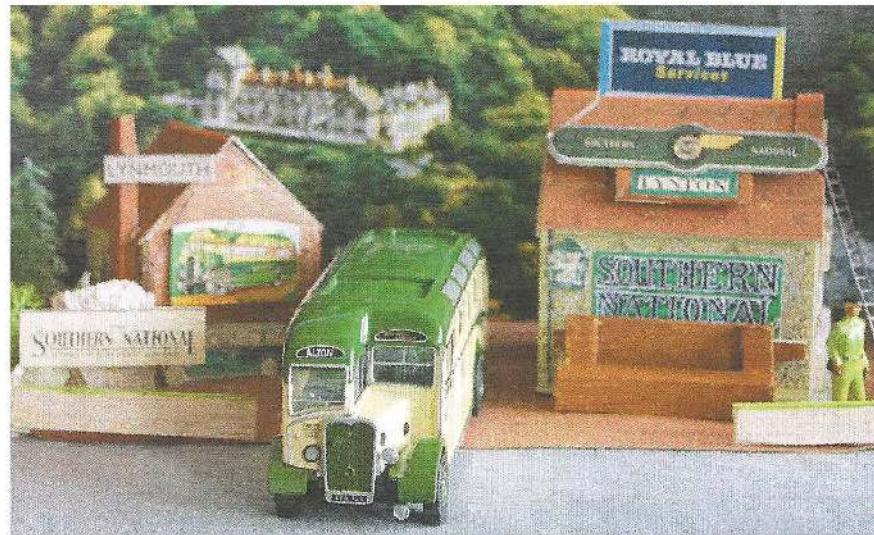
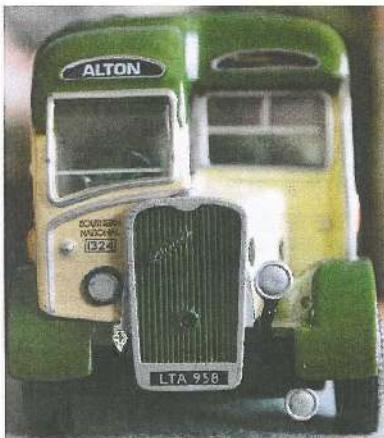
We also offer specialist turbo charger, air brake,
oil cooking and water pump repairs.

Units 4 & 5, Site 4, Alma Park Road, Alma Park Industrial Estate, Grantham NG31 9SE
Tel: (01476) 571 404 Mob: 07714 152 394 Fax: (01476) 579 636

www.cparadiators.co.uk

BRISTOL LL6B/DUPLE COACH – WITH A LITTLE DIFFERENCE...

Without any doubt, many readers will be familiar with Southern National's half-cab icon, Bristol LL6B/Duple coach, LTA 958, fleet no 1324. This elegant vehicle was delivered in 1951 and for several years was based at Lynton, North Devon. On a recent visit to Weymouth Museum, I found a fairly



large photograph in a permanent position, showing this unique luxury coach.

This reminded me of my own Corgi Classics model, photographed with a representation of the Southern National Booking Office at Lynton. Instead of the 'Bristol' script on the radiator, it has become a rather rare 'Lancet' – obviously a factory error. I am not completely

sure whether Southern National ever had a genuine Dennis coach? Well, they do have a Lancet, if only in miniature...

I wonder if any of the many Vintage Roadscene readers have any similar rarity, possibly by Corgi. By the way, I rather doubt if it would make any difference to the value.

Terry Giles, Trowbridge

KING COAL

Having enjoyed reading past issues, and had many a memory brought back by recent correspondence relating to the coal industry, I offer a few thoughts, but sadly no pictures.

I became involved in the industry in the late 1970s and finally severed connections about ten years ago. Throughout that time, my work was predominantly around transport – road, rail and sea; long distance bulk and more localised household deliveries.

Many of the recently mentioned collieries (Gedling, Calverton, Bolsover, Mansfield, etc) were used regularly. There has also been reference to concessionary coal – this being the free 4 tons (in my time) allowance given to every member of NCB staff – in NCB days, this was delivered by one of the many subsidiary companies National Fuel Distributors, which also ran many eight-wheeled tippers, which were a familiar sight around the various coal fields and motorways (dark blue and yellow paintwork).

There were of course, a huge number of hauliers involved in coal distribution, either from railhead concentration depots (built to allow closure of many branchlines that had lost their passenger service in the Beeching era) or direct from collieries, ports and briquetting plants. Of the many characters that I knew of or worked with, Taylors Transport of Lichfield (Blue Volvos) was an early introduction to the seedier side of transport, Ernie Richardson at Ilkeston was a tremendous character (had a Roller, but lived in a terrace house and used a bus pass), Percy Prior at Middle Barton Oxford (DAFs plus one Volvo, B201 UFC) and so many others. As far as I know, the only one still in business is Walters of Pontlliw Swansea. Great to open the door to decades of transport memories and characters, but enough for now.

Amyas Crump, Author, rail historian and vintage film collector, Exeter

'ON THE BUSES'

The secretary of Swansea Bus Museum e-mailed me on Friday and said that he was delighted to see ten pages in your latest publication devoted to South Wales Transport! On his recommendation I hurried down to W H Smith and purchased a copy of 'On The Buses'. Was I impressed! What a fantastic publication – the content and quality throughout the magazine are absolutely outstanding. Also, how co-incidental that just after you had published my 'Christmas Ghost Story' you have now followed it up with a feature on SWT, my former employers.

David Lloyd, via-e-mail.

CO-INCIDENCE

Thank you for publishing my two letters in the above issue; lets hope some of your readers can provide answers to the questions posed in the text (see page 73 – Ed). However the main reason for contacting you relates to the photograph of the Maudsley Merlin depicted on Page 36 of the Road Haulage Archive issue 'Here's One We Sold Earlier' (repeated here – Ed). You may remember that my article 'Youthful Reminiscences', published in an earlier issue mainly focused on my travels with Mansfield and Dawson drivers, the majority being in the vehicle shown

Colin Barker, Wilby, Suffolk



PILOT TIPPER GEAR

Many thanks for submitting my article on Sentinel dray wagons. Further to your comment article on Pilot tipping gear, I may be able to offer a bit of information on this subject, as I actually own one!

My 1947 Sentinel was converted from a John Smiths brewery platform to a dropside tipper during 1957. The conversion was carried out on a farm on a budget and everything was second-hand and reused. The pilot tipping gear was second-hand then so it must have been made in the early 1950s at least.

The farmers must have struggled to get the underfloor rams in the correct place as there were at least three sets of holes in the body subframe! The aforementioned subframe was very rusty



and weak, so had to be replaced with a new one. In fact, the entire body was renewed, replicating the original.

During the tipping gear restoration, I didn't have to do much really. The oil tank needed cleaning out, as there was around half an inch of sludge in the bottom. The rotary control shaft was replaced along with a new stuffing gland seal. The leather cup seals in the rams were replaced along with all new hydraulic flex hoses. The six cylinder swash plate PTO pump just needed cleaning and painting.

The whole system works fine and we have had 8 tons of wheat on board, which tipped up with no trouble. The Pilot control system is a bit haphazard, as it was only designed to simply tip up, dump load and drop down. There isn't a positive position to 'hold' in any particular



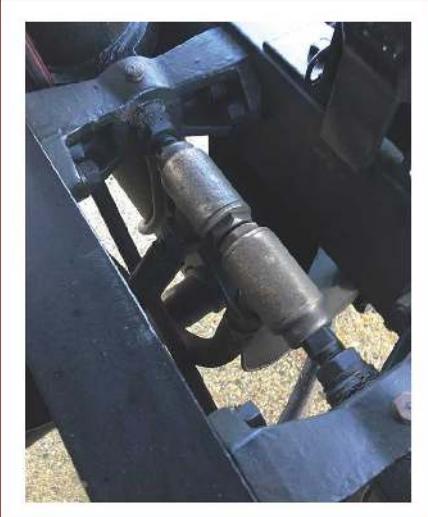
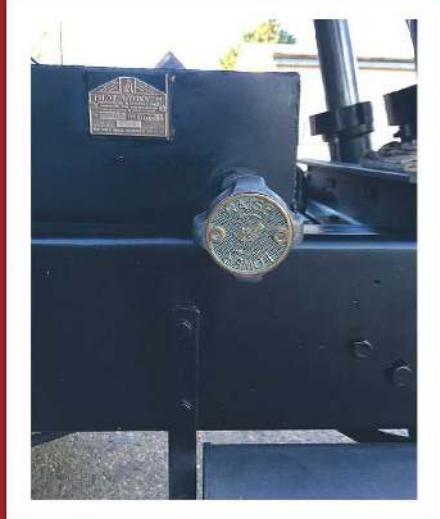
place. You can carefully back the control knob back to hold it, but turn your back and it's either going up or down on its own!

Once you stop the pump, it'll stay up, but we use a sturdy safety strut, if we need to look under the body.

A feature on Pilot underfloor rams is the fluid inlet, via brass swivel couplings, which allows the installer to use solid metal feed pipes if required. The rams naturally oscillate when tipping and the swivel couplings compensate for this.

The brass Pilot Works plate was originally fixed to the inspection cover on the top of the tank. I moved it to the side so that it can be read easily when showing.

Stephen Peck, Norwich.



THORNYCROFT MEMORY

The interesting article from Ron on the Thornycroft fire truck reminded me of the day I spent with the RAF at Manston, many years ago, where I photographed a lot of things, including the attached Thornycroft for use in the letter pages.

I hope it was a misprint on page 34, that the last in the road



haulage series was supposed to read the latest. This series is now my reference work on old trucks, as I don't tend to buy books these days.

Les Freathy, via e-mail

Fear not, it was a misprint. I don't know how it happened, maybe 'predictive text', the bane of any writer's life! There are no plans to finish the series, in fact, we've added a parallel series on buses...



RUSH GREEN BEAUTIES

Peter Hamer has sent us some pictures of lorries he saw at Rush Green Motors in September 2018 - ripe for restoration?

They include WHN 789G, a blue and white Scammell Handyman tractor unit, with a Darlington address on the door; ANK 434K, a Seddon Atkinson 401, once Esso fleet no 292; an ERF 'A' Series, GUA 977N, with a Cummins engine, previously owned by Rolls-Royce (shouldn't it have had the company's own engine?); an ERF 'C' Series, with 'Rovin' Rocker' on the front panel; a Spanish-built Dodge 'Barreiros' tractor unit; a Ford Cargo artic unit from Ray Howells Transport, Swansea; A152 HUE a 'SAM' - Seddon Atkinson Municipal refuse collection vehicle; ERF 'B' Series, HDA 599W; a Cummins-powered Foden S80, ex-Stuart Handley's fleet no 8; and UVH 894V, a Seddon Atkinson 400, which he thinks might have been an ex-Freightliner vehicle?



RAILWAY LORRY POSTCARD

This May 1930 picture of Torre Station goods yard in Devon depicts Great Western Railway (GWR) rebuilt AEC 3.5 ton fleet no 286, XM 9791 (London County Council, 1922-23), being loaded with chain-driven agricultural machinery, destined for the Bath and West and Southern Counties Show to be held in Torquay. No 286 was one of approximately 130 ex-Army vehicles purchased by the GWR after World War I, and was originally fitted with a coach body incorporating a roll-back canvas roof; the conversion to the lorry format was in 1927. The railway station was the original for Torquay when the line opened in 1848, but a subsequent extension in 1859 created the current station for the town.

Colin Barker, Wilby, Suffolk.



COSSINGTON COMMERCIALS CORRECTION

I would like to bring to your attention some misleading facts in your article on Parrs of Leicester. Cossington Commercials were ERF distributors from 1966 to 1990. Taking on Mercedes-Benz from 1990 to 1995. The financial difficulties you mention were caused more by M-B, than rescued by them. You also mention A K Commercials who, in fact, operated from Chestnut Farm some half a mile away. I do have knowledge of Cossingtons, as I am the founder's son. I always enjoy your magazine but am disappointed with the untruths in this article. Feel free to give me a call if you want true facts.

Alvin Davies, Alvin Davies Limited (Quality Truck Specialist) Wymeswold Industrial Park, Loughborough, Leicestershire

Thanks for the correction and I look forward to speaking to you, hopefully with a view to putting together an article on Cossington Commercials, in which I'm sure readers would be interested...

MODEL ROADSCENE

I'm a regular reader of Vintage Roadscene and I enjoy every issue. I particularly like the articles on Model Roadscene in the January 2019 issue, as I also build models of cars and lorries.

I too remember the old TV shows, like 'Echo Four Two' and enjoyed the references to the 'Q' cars being Triumph Herald. I seem to remember that at least one of the cars used was a Sunbeam Rapier (Echo Four Two was, I believe the radio call sign for this vehicle). Although a lot of early stuff like this is available on DVD, I think all of these were lost, as they would have been broadcast live or were on early videotape.

As tape was expensive in those days, it was often re-used and the tape 'wiped'. Perhaps we could see a feature on these old shows in a future issue?

The photos of the models were well done too. I loved the reference to the song "57 Chevrolet", but surely this was Billie Jo Spears, not Dolly Parton? Please don't think I'm picking holes in the article, it was very entertaining. Thanks for a great issue,

**Richard Tyjas,
Harwich, Essex.**

Glad you are enjoying the articles. We bow to your superior knowledge of the 'Country and Western' ladies...!

MAW'S VANS

With reference to Colin Barker's postcard views in Scene & Heard in issue 230, the Maw's factory was at end of Cromer Road in New Barnet. In the late 1940s, I attended Cromer Road Junior School and watched vehicles going in and out. The area is now housing estate.

Great magazine, with lots of memories.
A Osborn, via e-mail



NEXT MONTH...

BREWERY VEHICLES

**DRIVING FOR
TUFFNELL'S PARCELS**

BACK END OF A BUS...

**MORE EX-
FAIRGROUND ATKIS**

**KENT & SUSSEX
PART 7**

1980S ELECTRICS



PLUS ALL THE USUAL FEATURES...

MARCH 2019 ISSUE ON SALE FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 15TH

* Circumstances might cause the planned contents to change

Out with The Old, In with The New...



... Except, in our case, while we are happy to see in the New Year, we certainly aren't getting rid of the 'old' – that's what this magazine is all about. Here are a couple of pictures which have kindly been sent to me, knowing my interest in vehicles from the area where I grew up. They show lorries in the fleet of Lacon's Brewery, based in Great Yarmouth, Norfolk.

Lacon's Falcon Brewery dated from 1760, its beer becoming well-known in the area and beyond, but was sold to Whitbread in 1965 and closed in 1968. However, after years lost in a subsequent big combine's tangled web, the good news is that the Lacon name has recently been revived and, using the original yeast strain, deep-frozen in 1957, the original brew is again available. This craft beer really does have a heritage!

But back to the lorries. Allan Bedford sent me the picture of the two Dodges, fleet nos 1 and 2, registered locally as EX 4201 and 4202 in 1937. These 4-tonners were becoming popular with many different operators at the time and this pair probably gave the brewery good service over the years.

The other picture, which might not have reproduced as well as we might have liked, dates from more recent times. This came to me from David Cooke, President of the Dinky



Toys Collectors Association, who is a native of Yarmouth. It shows the Lacons delivery fleet lined up outside the brewery, at a guess, in the late 1950s. The company's yellow and black livery adorns a varied selection of vehicles, although the two Dodges now seem to have been replaced.

My abiding memories of the Lacons lorries from my youth in the 1950s-'60s is of Morris/BMC vehicles, of which we can see here seven FE 5 and 7-tonners (Corgi Classics included a model of an FE artic in its brewery lorry range, but I can only remember seeing rigid platform lorries). There are also two earlier Morris-Commercial FV types in the picture, along with two early Commer QXs, six Bedfords, an 'S' Type, two 'TA's an 'M', 'OL' and 'K' or 'M' Type integral van, an Albion, a Thames ET6 or 4D, plus three Scammell 6 ton Mechanical Horses.

Quite a mixture and quite a large fleet for a provincial brewery, but it produced 100,000 barrels of beer a year, at one time,

supplying all its own tied houses, as well as sending a good proportion of the output as far away as London (so maybe there were artics in the fleet..)

The response to our Scenes Past and Allan's features on brewery lorries of the past shows that readers are always interested in what brought their beer to the pub in the past (we'll have some more next month, but we're running out!), the vehicles don't seem to be so exciting these days, or is it me? If you have any pictures of brewers' drays of the past, please don't hesitate to get in touch, as you are bound to make other readers happy if we can show them...

Now, let's all raise a glass or cup of our favourite 'tipple' – whether that be beer, something stronger or tea, coffee or even orange squash – and look forward to a good 2019 and, being a bit selfish here, especially for all of us classic vehicles enthusiasts. Cheers!

